AN

ARKE

FOR ALL

GODS NOAHS

In a gloomy ſtormy day;

OR,

The beſt Wine reſerved till laſt.

OR,

The tranſcendent Excellency of a believers portion above all earthly Portions whatſoever:

Diſcovered in ſeveral *SERMONS*, which may be of ſingular uſe at all times, but eſpecially in theſe Breaking times, wherein many have, and many daily do break for more than their all, and wherein many thouſands are turned out of all, &c.

By *THOMAS BROOKS*, late Preacher of the Goſpel at *Margarets New Fiſhſtreet*, and ſtill Preacher of the Word in *London*, and Paſtor of a Congregation there.

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my ſoul, I cryed unto thee, O Lord, I ſaid, thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living, Pſal. 142. 4, 5.

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All the *Merchants*, and *Trades-men* of *England*, especially these of the City of *London*, with all other sorts and ranks of persons that either have, or would have God for their portion, *Grace, mercy, & peace be multiplied.*

Gentlemen,

THe wisest Prince that ever sate upon a Throne hath told us, That a word fitly spoken is like Apples of gold in pictures of silver, *or as the Hebrew hath* Prov. 21. 11.

it, a word spoken (על אפנן) *upon his wheels, that is, rightly ordered, placed, and circumstantiated. Such a word is of all words the most excellent, the most prevalent, and the most pleasant word that can be spoken: such a word is indeed a word that is like* Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver; *of all words such a word is most precious, most sweet, most desirable, and most delectable. O Sirs, to time a word, to set a word upon the wheels, to speak a word to purpose is the project of this Book. Though all truths are glorious, yet there is a double glory upon seasonable truths; and therefore I have made it my great business in this Treatise to hold forth as seasonable a truth, and as weighty a truth, and as comfortable*

fortable and inconraging a truth as any I know in all the Book of God. The Mother of King Cyrus *willed, that the words of those that spoke unto her son, should be in silk, but certainly seasonable words are alwayes better than silken words.*

Every prudent husbandman observes his fitteſt seasons to sow his seeds, and therefore some he sowes in the Autumn *and fall of the Leaf, and some in the* Spring *and renewing of the year; some he sowes in a dry season, and some he sowes in a wet; some he sowes in a moist clay, and some he sowes in a sandy dry ground, as the* Holy Ghost *speaks,* He sow-eth the Fitches and the Cum-min, and casteth in Wheat by measure. *And so all spiri-*

Isa. 28. 25.

tual husbandmen muſt wiſely obſerve their fitteſt ſeaſons for the ſowing of that immortal ſeed that God hath put into their hands, and ſuch a thing as this is I have had in my eye; but whether I have hit the mark, or miſt it, let the Chriſtian Reader judge.

One ſpeaking of the glory of heaven, ſaith, That the good things of eternal life are ſo many, that they exceed number, ſo great that they exceed meaſure, and ſo precious that they are above all eſtimation, &c. the ſame may I ſay concerning the Saints portion, for certainly the good things that are in their portion, in their God, are ſo many that they exceed number, ſo great that they exceed meaſure, and ſo precious that they are above all eſtimation.

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The ſame Author in one of his Epiſtles hath this remarkable relation, viz. *That the ſame day wherein* Jerom *died, he was in his Study, and had got pen, ink, and paper to write ſomething of the glory of heaven to* Jerom, *and ſuddenly he ſaw a light breaking into his Study, and ſmelt alſo a very ſweet ſmell, and this voice he thought he heard.* O Auguſtine, *what doeſt thou? doſt think to put the Sea into a little veſſel? when the heavens ſhall ceaſe from their continual motion, then ſhalt thou be able to underſtand what the glory of heaven is, and not before, except you come to feel it, as I now do. Certainly, the glory of heaven is beyond all conception, and all expreſſion, and ſo is that portion that is*

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a little hinted at in the following Diſcourſe. And indeed a full deſcription of that God that is the believers portion, is a work too high for an Aaron *when ſtanding upon Mount* Hor; *or for a* Moſes, *when ſtanding on the top of* Nebo *after a* Piſgah *proſpect; yea, it is a work too high and too hard for all thoſe bleſſed Seraphims that are ſtill a crying before the throne of God,* Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hoſts. *No finite being, though never ſo glorious, can ever be able fully to comprehend an infinite being. In the ſecond Verſe of the ſixth of* Iſaiah *we read that each Seraphim had ſix wings, and that with twain he covered the face of God, with twain his feet, and with twain he did fly, intimating*

Num. 20. & ch. 33. Deut. 32. 49. and chap. 34. 1. Iſa. 6. 3.

(as

(as one well obſerves upon the place) that with twain they covered his face, the face of God, not their own face, and with twain they covered his feet, not their own feet; They covered his face, his beginnig being unknown; they covered his feet, his end being incomprehenſible, onely the middle are to be ſeen the things which are, whereby there may be ſome glimmering knowledge made out what God is. The wiſe man hit it, when he ſaid, That which is afar off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? *who can find out what God is? The knowledge of him a priori is ſo far off, that he whoſe arm is able to break even a bow of ſteel is not able to reach it; ſo far off, that he who is able to make his neſt with the Eagle is not*

Vide Origen on the Text.

Eccl. 7.24. There are many depths in God which our ſhallow reaſon cannot fathom; & indeed it is the credit of our Religion, and the glory

of our God, that he is unſearchable

not able to ſly unto it. And ſo exceeding deep that he who could follow the Leviathan *could not fathom it; that he who could ſet out the center of the earth, is not able to find it out; And who then is able to reach it? In a word, ſo far off, and ſo deep too, that the Depth ſaith, it is not in me, and the Sea ſaith, it is not in me; it is ſuch a deep to men and Angels as far exceeds the capacity of both.* Auguſtine *ſpeaking to that queſtion, what God is? gives this anſwer; Surely ſuch a one is he, who when he is ſpoken of, cannot be ſpoken of; who when he is conſidered, cannot be conſidered of, who when he is compared to any thing cannot be compared; and when he is defined groweth greater by defining of him.*

Auguſt. de fide contra Arrianos, cap. 6.

him. If that great Apostle that learned his Divinity among the Angels, yea, to whom the Holy Ghost was an immediate Tutor, did know but in part, then certainly those that are most acute and judicious in divine knowledge, may very well conclude, that they know but part of that part that was known to him. As for my own part, I dare pretend but to a spark of that knowledge that others have attained to; and yet who can tell but that God may turn this spark into such a flame as may warm the hearts of many of his dear and precious ones. Much is done many times by a spark.

Such are not onely good Scholars, but also great Scholars, who have learned contentedly to be ignorant where God would not have them knowing.

O Sirs, catch not at the present profits, pleasures, preferments, and honours of this world, but lay up a good foun-

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dation for the time to come, provide for eternity, make sure your interest and propriety in God. It was an excellent saying of Lewis *of* Bavyer, *Emperour of* Germany, *Such goods (said he) are worth getting and owning, as will not sink or wash away, if a Shipwrack happen. How many of you have lost your all by Shipwracks? and how hath divine providence by your multiplied crosses and losses taught you that the good things and the great things of this world cannot be made sure. How many of you have had rich inheritances left you by your fathers, besides the great portions that you have had with your wives, and the vast estates that you have gained by Trading; but what is become of all? is not*

all

all buried in the deep, or in the grave of oblivion? O the unconſtancy, and the grand impoſtury of this world! Oh the flux and reflux of riches, greatneſſe, honours, and preferments! how many men have we ſeen ſhining in their worldly pomp and glory like ſtars in the Firmament, who are now vaniſhed into ſmoak or Comets? How hath the Moon of many great mens riches and honours been eclipſed at the full, and the Sun of their pomp gone down at noon?

It was (ſaith the Hiſtorian) a wonderful precedent of the vanity and variety of humane condition to ſee mighty Exerxes *to float and fly away in a ſmall Veſſel, who but a little before wanted Sea-room for his Navy. The* Dutch *to expreſs the*

Juſtin.

the worlds vanity and uncertainty have very wittily pictured a man with a full blown bladder on his shoulders, and another standing by pricking the bladder with a pin, with this Motto, Quam subito, *how soon is all blown down? I am not willing to make the Porch too wide, else I might have given you famous instances of the vanity and uncertainty of all worldly wealth, pomp, and glory, from the* Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, Grecian *and* Roman *Kingdomes, whose glory now lies all in the dust. By all this it is most evident that earthly portions cannot be made sure*, they make themselves wings, and they fly away, Prov. 23.5.

O but now God is a portion that may be made sure. In the time

time of the Marian *Perſecution, there was a woman who being convened before bloody* Bonner, (*then Biſhop of* London) *upon the trial of Religion, he threatned her that he would take away her husband from her: Saith ſhe, Chriſt is my husband; I will take away thy child, Chriſt, ſaith ſhe, is better to me than ten ſons; I will ſtrip thee, ſaith he, of all thy outward comforts, but Chriſt is mine, ſaith ſhe, and you cannot ſtrip me of him. A Chriſtian may be ſtript of any thing but his God, he may be ſtript of his eſtate, his friends, his relations, his liberty, his life, but he can never be ſtript of his God. As God is a portion that none can give to a Chriſtian, but himſelf; ſo God is a portion that none can*

Mr. Fox, *Acts and Monum.*

take from a Christian but himself; and therefore as ever you would have a sure portion, an abiding portion, a lasting portion, yea, an everlasting portion, make sure of God for your portion.

X O Sirs, that you would judge that only worth much now, which will be found of much worth at last, when you shall lie upon a dying bed, and stand before a Judgment-seat. O that men would prize and value all earthly portions now, as they will value them when they come to die, and when their souls shall sit upon their trembling lips, and when there shall be but a short step between them and eternity, O at what a poor rate, at what a low rate do men value their earthly portions then certainly it will be their

their very great wiſdome to value their earthly portions now as they would value them then. And O that men would value this glorious, this matchleſſe portion that is held forth in this Treatiſe now, as they will value it and prize it when they come to die, and when they come to lanch out into the ocean of eternity. I have read of a Stationer, *who being at a* Fair, *hung out ſeveral pictures of men famous in their kinds, among which he had alſo the Picture of Chriſt, upon which divers men bought according to their ſeveral fancies; the Souldier buyes his* Cæſar, *the Lawyer his* Juſtinian, *the Phyſician his* Galen, *the Philoſopher his* Ariſtotle, *the Poet his* Virgil, *the Orator his* Cicero, *and the Divine his* Auguſtine;

but all this while the picture of Chriſt hung by as a thing of no value, till a poor Chapman that had no more money then would purchaſe that, bought it, ſaying, Now every man hath taken away his God, let me have mine too. *O Sirs, it would make any gracious, any ſerious, any ingenious, any conſcientious heart to bleed to ſee at what a high rate all ſorts and ranks of men do value earthly portions, which at beſt are but counterfeit pictures, when as this glorious portion that is here treated on hangs by as a thing of no value, of no price; moſt men are mad upon the world, and ſo they may have much of that for their portion, they care not whether ever they have God for their portion, or no:*

Give

Give them but a Palace in Paris, *and then with that French Duke they care not for a place in Paradiſe: Give them but a meſſe of pottage, and let who will take the birthright; give them but Manna in a wilderneſſe, and let who will take the land of* Canaan; *give them but ground which is pleaſant and rich, and then with the* Reubenites *they will gladly take up their reſt on this ſide the Holy Land; give them but their bags full, and their barns full, and then with the rich fool in the Goſpel, they can think of nothing but of taking their eaſe, and of eating, and drinking, and making merry. So bruitiſh and fooliſh are they in their underſtandings, as if their precious and immortal ſouls were good*

The Duke of *Burbone.*

Luke 12. 16--22.

for nothing, but as ſalt to keep their bodies from rotting and ſtinking.

O that theſe men would ſeriouſly conſider, that as a cup of pleaſant wine offered to a condemned man in the way to his execution; and as the Feaſt of him who ſate under a naked ſword hanging perpendicularly over his head by a ſlender thread, and as Adams *forbidden fruit, ſeconded by a flaming ſword, and as* Belſhazzars *dainties overlooked by an hand-writing againſt the wall, ſuch and onely ſuch are all earthly portions to thoſe that have not God for their portion.*

Well, Gentlemen, *remember this, there is no true happineſſe to be found in any earthly portions;*

tions; Solomon *having made a critical enquirie after the excellency of all creature-comforts, gives this in as the ultimate extraction from them all*, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. *If you ſhould go to all the creatures round, they will tell you that happineſſe is not in them: If you ſhould go to the earth, the earth will tell you that happineſſe grows not in the furrows of the field. If you go to the Sea, the Sea will tell you, that happineſſe is not in the Treaſures of the deep; If you go to the beaſts of the field, or to the birds of the air, they will tell you, that happineſſe is not to be found on their backs, nor in their bowels; If you go to your bags or heaps of gold and ſilver, they will tell you that happineſſe is*

not to be found in them; If you go to Crowns and Scepters, they will tell you that happineſſe is too precious and too glorious a Gemme to be found in them.

As it is not the great Cage that makes the bird ſing, ſo it is not the great eſtate that makes the happy life, nor the great portion that makes the happy ſoul. There is no true comfort, nor no true happineſſe to be drawn out of the ſtanding pools of outward ſufficiencies; all true comfort and happineſs is onely to be found in having of an all-ſufficient God for your portion, Pſal. 144. 15. Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe, yea, happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord. *And therefore as ever you would be happy in both worlds,*

worlds, it very highly concerns you to get an intereſt in God, and to be reſtleſſe in your own ſouls till you come to enjoy God for your portion.

A man that hath God for his portion, is a none-ſuch, he is the rareſt and the happieſt man in the world, he is like the morning-ſtar in the midſt of the clouds, he is like the Moon when it is at full, he is like the flower of the Roſes in the Spring of the year, he is like the Lillies by the Springs of waters, he is like the branches of Frankincenſe in the time of Summer, he is like a veſſel of maſſie gold that is ſet about with all manner of precious ſtones.

This you will finde fully cleared up in the following Treatiſe.

Nothing can make that man miſerable that hath God for his

his portion, nor nothing can make that man happy that wants God for his portion: the more rich, the more wretched; the more great, the more graceless; the more honourable, the more miserable that man will be that hath not God for his portion. The Sodomites *were very wealthy; and who more wanton and wicked than they? the* Egyptians, *and* Babylonians *were very rich, great, and potent in the world, and what greater oppressors and persecutors of the people of God than these? O the slavery, the captivity, and the woful misery of the people of God under those cruel Tyrants! Have not the* Nimrods, *the* Nebuchadnezzars, *the* Belshazzars, *the* Alexanders, *and the* Cæsars, &c. *been*

been commonly the Lords of the world? and who ſo abominably wicked as theſe? no men for wickedneſſe have been able tomatch them, or come neer them.

It hath been long ſince obſerved to my hand, that Daniel *ſets forth the ſeveral Monarchies of the World by ſundry ſorts of cruel beaſts, to ſhew that as they were gotten by beaſtly ſubtilty and cruelty, ſo they were ſupported and maintained by brutiſh ſenſuality, craft, and tyranny.* Dan. 7.

I have read of a Lacedemonian *that ſaid, that they well deſerved death that did but quench Tyranny, they ſhould quite have conſumed it with fire: But whether he hit the mark, or miſſ it, let the Reader*

Reader judge. Well, Sirs, you may be the Lords of this world, and yet you will certainly be miſerable in another world, except you get God for your portion. The top of mans happineſſe in this world lies in his having of God for his portion. He that hath God for his portion, enjoyes all; and he that wants an intereſt and propriety in God, enjoyes nothing at all.

Gentlemen, *I have read of an Heathen, who ſeeing a ſudden Shipwrack of all his wealth, ſaid, Well, Fortune, I ſee now that thou wouldeſt have me to be a* Philoſopher. *O that you would ſay under all your heavie loſſes and croſſes: well, we now ſee that God would have us lay up treaſure in heaven, we now ſee that God*

Matth. 6. 19, 20.

God would have us look after a better portion than any this world affords; we now see that it highly concerns us to secure our interest and propriety in God; we now see, that to enjoy God for our portion is the one thing necessary. Have not many of you said, nay sworne, That if you might but see & enjoy the delight of your eyes, that then you should have a sweeping Trade, and abound in all plenty and prosperity, and grow rich and great, and glorious in the world, and be eased of everie thing that did but look like a burthen, &c. If it be indeed thus with you, why do you so complain, murmur, and repine? and why do many of you walk up and down the Exchange *and streets with tears in your eyes,*

eyes, and with heavineſſe in your hearts, and with crack't credits, and thread-bare coats, and empty purſes? and why are ſo many of you broke, and ſo manie priſoners, and ſo manie hid, and ſo manie fled? But if it be otherwiſe, and that you are ſenſible that you have put a cheat upon your ſelves (I ſay not upon others) and that as you have been ſelf-flatterers, ſo you have been ſelf-deceivers, the more highly it concernes you to do your ſelves, your ſouls that right, as to make ſure God for your portion: For what elſe can make up thoſe woful diſappointments under which you are fallen.

It is a ſad ſight to ſee all the arrows that men ſhoot to fall upon their own heads, or to

to see men twist a cord to hang themselves, or to see men dig a pit for others, and to fall into it themselves; and it tis but justice that men should bake as they brew, and that they which brew mischief should have the first and the largest draught of it themselves.

Now the best way to prevent so sad a sight, and so great a mischief, is to get God for your portion: for when once God comes to be a mans portion, then all things shall work together for his good, *Rom.* 8. 28. *and then God will preserve him from such hurtful and mischievous actings. The whole World is a great* Bedlam, *and multitudes there are that think madly, and that design madly, and that talk madly, and that act madly,*

and

and that walk madly. Now as you would not be found in the number of thoſe Bedlams, *it highly concerns you to get God for your portion, that ſo you may be filled with that wiſdome that may preſerve you from the follie and madneſſe of this mad world.*

Gentlemen, *The following* Sermons *I preached in the year* 1660. *at* Olaves Breadſtreet, *and God bleſt them then to thoſe Chriſtians that attended on my Miniſtry, and I hope he will bleſſe them alſo to the internal and eternal welfare of your ſouls to whom they are now dedicated. They are much inlarged; the profit will be yours, the labour hath been mine: I judge them very ſeaſonable and ſuitable to preſent diſpenſations, elſe they had*

not

not see the light at this time. Curiosity is the spiritual adultery of the soul; curiosity is that green-sickness of the soul, whereby it longs for novelties, and loaths sound and wholsome truths; it is the Epidemical distemper of this age and hour.

And therefore if any of you are troubled with this itch of curiosity, and love to be wise above what is written, and delight to scan the choice mysteries of Religion by carnal reason, and affect elegant expressions and Seraphical notions, and the flowers of Rhetorick, more than sound and wholsome Truths, *then you may ease your selves (if you please) of the trouble of reading this following Treatise; onely remember this, that the*

prudent Husband-man looks more and delights more in the ripenesse, and soundnesse, and goodnesse of the Corn that is in his Field, than he doth at the beauty of the Cockle; and remember, that no man can live more miserably than he that lives altogether upon Sawces; and he that looks more at the handsomnesse than he doth at the wholsomnesse of the Dishes of Meat that are set before him, may well passe for a fool.

Well, Gentlemen, for a Close remember this, that as Noah *was drunk with his own wine, and as* Goliah *was beheaded by his own sword, and as the rose is destroyed by the canker that it breeds in it self, and as* Agrippina *was killed by* Nero, *to*

to whom she gave breath; so if ever you are eternally destroyed, you will be destroyed by your selves; if ever you are undone, you will be undone by your selves; if ever you are scourged to death, it will be by rods of your own making, and if ever the bitter cup of damnation be put into your hands, it will be found to be of your own preparing, mingling, and imbittering.

Behold, I have set life and death, heaven and hell, glory and misery before you in this Treatise: and therefore if you will needs chuse death rather than life, hell rather than heaven, misery rather than glory:

What can be more just than that you should perish to all eternity. If you will not have God for your portion, you shall be sure to have wrath for your portion, and hell for your portion, &c.

Well Sirs, remember this at last, every man shall onely thank his own folly for his own bane, his own sin, for his own everlasting shame, his own iniquity, for his own endlesse misery.

I have now no more to do, but to improve all the interest that I have in Heaven, That this Treatise may

may be bleſt to all your ſouls and that you all experience what it is to have God for your portion: *for that will be my joy as well as yours, and my Crown as well as yours, and my glorying as well as yours in the great day of our Lord Jeſus. And ſo I commend you to God, and to the* word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are ſanctified. *And reſt,*

Acts 20. 32.

Gentlemen,

Your Souls Servant

Thomas Brooks.

A MATCHLESSE PORTION.

LAMENT. 3.24.

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him.

CErtainly, if *Ennius* could pick out Gold out of a Dunghil, I may, by Divine Assistance, much better pick out golden matter out of such a golden Myne, as my Text is, to enrich the souls of men withall.

Apelles. The beſt of Painters, to draw an exquiſite *Venus*, had ſet before him an hundred choice and ſelected beauties, to take from one an eye, another a lip, a third a ſmile, a fourth an hand, and from each of them that ſpecial lineament in which ſhe moſt excelled: but I have no need of any other Scripture to be ſet before me, to draw forth the excellency of the Saints portion, than that which I have now pitch't upon; for the beauty, excellency, and glory of an hundred choice Scriptures are epitomized in this one.

The Jewiſh Doctors, and other Writers differ about the time of *Jeremiahs* penning this Book of the *Lamentations*; but to be ignorant of the circumſtance of time when this Book was made, is ſuch a crime, as I ſuppoſe will not be charg'd upon any mans account in the great day of our Lord Jeſus.

Doubtleſſe this Book of the *Lamentations* was compoſed by *Jeremiah* in the time of the *Babyloniſh* cap-

captivity. In this Book the Prophet sadly laments and bewails the grievous calamities and miseries that had befallen the Jews, *viz.* the ruine of their State, the devastation of their land, the destruction of their glorious City and Temple (which was the great wonder of the world) the prophanation of all his holy things, the contemptible and deplorable condition of all sorts, ranks, and degrees of men; and then he complains of their sins, as the procuring causes of all those calamities, that God, in his righteousness, had inflicted upon them: He exhorts them also to patience under the mighty hand of God, and stirs them up to repent, and reform, as they would have their sins pardoned, judgments removed, divine wrath pacified, their insulting enemies suppressed, and former acts and grants of favour and grace restored to them.

But to come to the words of my Text.

The Lord *Jehovah*, from *Havah*, *He was*: this name *Jehovah* is the most proper Name of God, and 'tis never attributed to any, but to God.

The three syllables contain the notes of all times. *Je*, the time to come, *Ho*, the time present, *Vah*, the time past.

First, *Jehovah* sets out Gods eternity, in that it containeth all times, future, present, and past.

Secondly, It sets out also Gods Self-existency, coming from *Havah*, to *Be*.

Thirdly, When either some special mercy is promised, or some extraordinary judgment is threatned, then the Name of *Jehovah* is commonly annexed, to shew, that that God, whose being is from himself, and who gives a being to all his creatures, both in heaven, and on earth, will certainly give a being to his promises and threatnings, and not fail to accomplish the words that are gone out of his mouth.

Fourthly, This name *Jehovah* consists onely of quiescent letters, *i.e.* letters of rest, (as the Hebrews call them) to shew, that there is

no rest till we come to *Jehovah*, and that in him we may safely and securely rest, as the Dove did in *Noahs* Ark.

Is my portion, *Chelki*, from חלק *Chalak*; the Hebrew word signifies *to divide*. He alludes, as I take it, to the dividing of the Land of *Canaan* amongst the Israelites, by lot; *The Lord*, saith he, *is my portion*, my part, my lot, and with this portion I rest fully satisfied, as the Israelites were to do with their parts and portions in that pleasant Land. 'Tis true, saith *Jeremiah* (in the name of the Church) I am thus and thus afflicted, and sorely distressed on all hands, but yet the Lord is my portion, and that supports, and bares up my spirits from fainting and sinking in this evil day.

Saith my soul, *Naphshi*, from נפש *Nepheſh*; the Hebrew word hath nine several senses or significations in the Scripture. But let this suffice, that by *soul* here in the Text, we are to understand the heart,

the minde, the ſpirit, and the underſtanding of a man. Well, ſaith the Prophet, though I am in a ſea of ſorrow, & in a gulf of miſery, yet my heart tells me, that *the Lord is my portion*, my minde tells me, that *the Lord is my portion*, my ſpirit tells me, that *the Lord is my portion*, and my underſtanding tells me, that *the Lord is my portion*: and therefore I will bare up bravely in the face of all calamities and miſeries.

Therefore will I hope in him: the Hebrew word ויחל that is here rendered *hope*, is from יחל *Jachal* that ſignifies both hoping, expecting, and truſting, alſo it ſignifies a patient waiting upon the Lord. The Prophet *Jeremiah* had not only a witneſſe above him, but alſo a witneſſe within him, that the Lord was his portion; and therefore he reſolves firmly to hope in the Lord, and ſweetly to truſt on the Lord, and quietly and patiently to wait upon the Lord, till God ſhould turn his ſtorm into a calm,

Gen 8.10. Iſa. 42.4. Pſal. 31.25.

and

and his ſad Winter into a bleſſed Summer.

In my Text there are three things obſervable.

Firſt, an Aſſertion, or Propoſition, in thoſe words, *The Lord is my portion.*

Secondly, A proof of it, in thoſe words, *Saith my ſoul.*

Thirdly, The uſe or inference from the premiſes, in thoſe words, *Therefore will I hope in him.*

The words being thus opened, the Propoſition that I intend to inſiſt upon, is this, *viz.*

That the Lord is the Saints portion, the Lord is the believers portion. Doct.

I ſhall call in a few Scriptures to witneſſe to the truth of this Propoſition, and then I ſhall further open it to you. *Pſal.* 16. 5. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.* Pſal. 73. 26. *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

Pſ. 119. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord, I have ſaid that I would keep thy words.* Jer. 10. 16. *The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things, and Iſrael is the Rod of his inheritance; the Lord of Hoſts is his name.*

Now for the further opening and clearing up of this great and glorious, this ſweet and bleſſed truth, I ſhall indeavour to ſhew you:

Firſt, what a portion the Lord is to his Saints, to his gracious ones. And.

Secondly; the reaſons or grounds whereupon the Saints have laid claim to God, as their portion.

For the firſt, What a portion God is. Now the excellency of this portion I ſhall ſhew you, by an induction of particulars thus:

Firſt, God is a preſent portion, he is a portion in hand, he is a portion in poſſeſſion; all the Scriptures that are cited to prove the Doctrine, evidence this to be a truth:

Pſal. 48 14. Iſa. 25. 9.

And

And ſo doth that, *Pſal.* 46. 1. *God is a very preſent help in trouble.* The Hebrew word *Batſaroth* is in the plurall number, *troubles*, that is, *God is a preſent help in many troubles*, in great troubles, and in continued troubles. *Batſaroth* is from צר *Tſur*, that ſignifies to ſtraiten, and cloſely to beſiege, it notes the extremity of affliction and trouble. When the people of God are in their greateſt extremity, then God will be a preſent help, a preſent portion to them. *Iſa.* 43. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee; when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee.* God will be a preſent help, a preſent relief, a preſent ſupport, a preſent comfort, a preſent portion to his people, in all thoſe great and various trials that they may

Maximilian the Emperour was ſo delighted with that ſentence of *Paul*, *Si Deus nobiſcum*, If God be with us, who ſhall be againſt us? that he cauſed it to be written upon the Walls in moſt rooms of his Palace.

may be exercised under. *Psal.* 142. 5. *I cried unto thee, O Lord; I said, thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living.* God is a portion in present possession, and not a portion in reversion; the Psalmist doth not say, Thou mayest be my portion in another world, but *Thou art my portion in the land of the living*: nor he doth not say, Thou wilt be my portion in another world, but *Thou art my portion in the land of the living*. Look, as *Elkanah* gave *Hannah* a worthy portion in hand, so God gives himself to his Saints, as a worthy portion in hand: Many men wait, and wait long for their earthly portions before they enjoy them, yea, their patience is oftentimes wore so thread-bare in waiting, that they wish their parents in *Abrahams* bosome, I, and sometimes in a worser place, that so they may inherit their Honours, Lordships, Lands, Treasures, &c. Look, as a bird in the hand is worth two, I, ten in the bush; so a portion in possession

1 Sam. 1. 5.

on is worth two, I, ten in reversi-on. Now God is a portion in pre-sent possession, and that speaks out the excellency of the Saints portion. As he in *Plutarch* said of the *Scythians*, that although they had no musick, nor vines among them, yet (as a better thing) they had gods. So I may say, though the Saints have not this, nor that, nor the other earthly portion among them, yet (as a better thing) they have God for their present portion: and what can they desire more? But

Secondly, As God is a present portion, so God is an immense portion, he is a vast, large portion, he is the greatest portion of all portions: 1 *Tim.* 6. 15. *which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and onely Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* These words are a stately and lofty description of the greatness of God: the Apostle heapeth up many words together, to shew, that in greatnesse God excels all, *Isa.* 40. 15, 16, 17. *Behold,*

hold, the Nations are as a drop of a bucket, & are counted as the small dust of the ballance: Behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him lesse than nothing, and vanity. Not onely one Nation, but many Nations; yea, not onely many Nations, but all Nations in comparison of God are but as the drop of a bucket: and what's lesser than a drop? and as the small dust of a ballance: and what is of lighter weight and lesser worth than the small dust or powder of the ballance, that hangs on the scale, and yet never alters the weight? yea, they are nothing, they are lesse than nothing. And though *Lebanon* was a very great spacious Forrest, and had abundance of beasts in it, yet God was a God of that infinite greatnesse, that though all the beasts harbouring in that stately Forrest should be slain, and all the wood growing

on

on it cut down to burn them with it, all would not make up a sacrifice any wayes answerable or proportionable to his greatnesse with whom they had to do: and so in that, *Psal.* 147. 5. *Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite*, or as the Hebrew hath it, *of his understanding there is no number*. Such is his greatnes, that he knows not onely all kinds and sorts of things, but even all particulars, though they exceed all number: *Psal.* 145. 3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable*, or as the Hebrew hath it, *of his greatnes there is no search*. God is infinitely above all names, all notions, all conceptions, all expressions, and all parallels: *Psa.* 150. 2. *Praise him for his mighty acts, praise him according to his excellent greatnes*, or greatnesse of greatnesse, or abundance of greatnesse, or according to the multitude of his greatnesse, as the Hebrew and Greek carries it: and so in that, *Deut.* 10. 17. *For the Lord your God is God*

In Daniel God is called *El Elim*, the mighty of mighties.

God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not perſons, nor taketh reward. God is the original cauſe of all greatneſs; all that greatneſs that is in any created beings, whether they are Angels, or men, is from God; all their greatneſſe is but a beam of his Sun, a drop out of his Sea, a mite out of his Treaſury. God is a God of that infinite greatneſſe, that he fills heaven and earth with his preſence, he is every where, and yet circumſcribed to no place, he is in all things, and without all things, and above all things, and this ſpeaks out his immenſity. *Job* had a very large portion, before God made a breach upon him, *He had ſeven thouſand ſheep, and three thouſand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred ſhe-aſſes, and a very great houſhold*; but at laſt God gives him twice as much as he had firſt, *for he had fourteen thouſand ſheep, and ſix thouſand camels, and a thouſand yoke of oxen, and a thouſand ſhe-aſſes.* Cattle

Pſal. 139.

Job 1. 3.

Job 42. 12.

are

are onely instanced in, because the wealth of that Countrey consisted especially in cattel; but yet doubtlesse *Job* had a great many other good things, as goods, lands, possessions, and stately habitations; but what is all this to a Saints portion? certainly, had not *Job* had God for his portion, he had been but a rich fool, a golden beast, notwithstanding all the great things that God had heaped upon him. And so *Ahasuerus* had a very large portion, *he reigned from* India *unto* Ethiopia *over an hundred and seven and twenty Provinces*, but what were all his Provinces; but as so many handfuls of dust, in comparison of the Saints portion? The whole Turkish Empire, saith *Luther*, is but a crust that God throws to a dog: had a man all the world for his portion, it would be but a poor pittance. *Nebuchadnezzar* had a very great portion, *Dan.* 5. 18, 19. *O thou King, the most high God gave thy father* Nebuchadnezzar *a Kingdome, and majesty, and glory, and honour.* Esth. 1. 1, 2.

And

And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, Nations, and languages trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down. And so in that, Jer. 27. 5, 6, 7, 8. *I have made the earth, the man, and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my out-stretched arm, and I have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of* Nebuchadnezzar, *King of* Babylon, *my servant, and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all Nations shall serve him, and his son, and his sons son, until the very time of his land come; and then many Nations and great Kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the Nation and Kingdome which will not serve the same* Nebuchadnezzar *the King of* Babylon, *and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the King of* Babylon, *that Nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the*

See Jer. 28. 14.

the

the famine, and with the peſtilence, until I have conſumed them by his hand. The portion that here God gives to *Nebuchadnezzar* is a wonderful large portion; and yet all theſe Nations that God gave to him, were but as ſo many molehils, or as ſo many birds neſts, compared with a Saints portion. All Nations are but as a drop of a bucket (that may in a moment be wip't off with a finger) in compariſon of God, nay, they are all nothing; but that word is too high, for they are leſſe than nothing: had a man as many worlds at his command as there be men on earth, or Angels in heaven, yet they would be but as ſo many drops, or as ſo many attomes to a Saints portion.

When *Alcibiades* was proudly boaſting of his lands that lay together, *Socrates* wittily rebukes his pride, by bringing him a Map of the world, and wiſhing him to ſhew him where his lands did lie; his lands would hardly amount to

more than the prick of a pin; *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland* are but three little ſpots, to the vaſt Continents that be in other parts of the world; and what then is thy palace, thy lordſhips, thy mannors, thy farme, thy houſe, thy cottage, but a little *minum*, but a prick of a pin to God, who is ſo great, ſo vaſt a portion? O Sirs, had you the underſtanding of all the Angels in heaven, and the tongues of all the men on earth, yet you would not be able to conceive, expreſs, or ſet forth the greatneſſe and largeneſſe of a Saints portion: Can you tell the ſtars of heaven, or number the ſands of the ſea, or ſtop the Sun in his courſe, or raiſe the dead, or make a new world? then, and not till then will you be able to declare what a great, what an immenſe portion God is: *If eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man* to conceive the great things that God hath laid up in the Goſpel, (for ſo that 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. is to be underſtood.)

derstood) Oh how much lesse then are they able to declare the great things that God hath laid up for his people in another world? But

Thirdly, As God is an immense portion, a large portion, so God is an all-sufficient portion, *Gen.* 17. 1. *And when* Abram *was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to* Abram, *and said unto him, I am the almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. I am God almighty*, or as some carry the words, *I am God all-sufficient*, or *self-sufficient*: God hath self-sufficiency and all-sufficiency in himself. Some derive the word *Shaddai* that is here rendered almighty, or all-sufficient, from *Shadnuge*, because God feeds his children with sufficiency of all good things, as the tender mother doth the sucking childe. *Gen.* 15. 1. *After these things the word of the Lord came unto* Abram *in a vision, saying, Fear not* Abram, *I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward*: I will be thy buckler to defend thee from all kinde of mischief and misc- 3.

In quo nihil desiderari possit boni, Zanch. de nat. Dei l. 4. c. 1. Qu. 1

ries, and I will be thy exceeding great reward to ſupply thee with all neceſſary and deſirable mercies; and what can a Saint deſire more? *Pſal.* 84. 11. *For the Lord God is a Sun and ſhield; the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* The Sun, which among all inanimate creatures is the moſt excellent, notes all manner of excellency, proviſion, and proſperity; and the ſhield, which among all artificial creatures is the chiefeſt, notes all manner of protection whatſoever; under the name of grace all ſpiritual good is wrapt up; and under the name of glory all eternal good is wrapt up; and under the laſt clauſe, *no good thing will he with-hold*, is wrapt up all temporal good: all put together ſpeaks out God to be an all-ſufficient portion. Before the world was made, before Angels or men had a being, God was as bleſſed and as glorious in himſelf as now he is; God is ſuch an all-ſufficient and

and ſuch an excellent being, that nothing can be added to him to make him more excellent: Man in his beſt eſtate is ſo great a piece of vanity, that he ſtands in need of a thouſand thouſand things; he needs the air to breath in, the earth to bare him, and fire to warm him, and cloathes to cover him, and an houſe to ſhelter him, and food to nouriſh him, and a bed to eaſe him, and friends to comfort him, &c. But this is the excellency of God, that he hath all excellencies in himſelf, and ſtands in need of nothing. Were there as many worlds as there are men in the world, and were all thoſe worlds full of bleſſed Saints, yea, were there as many Heavens as there are ſtars in heaven, and were all thoſe heavens full of glorious Angels, yet all theſe Saints; and Angels together could not adde the leaſt to God; for what can drops taken out of the Sea adde unto the Sea? what can finite creatures adde to an infinite being? Pſal. 39 5.

though all the men in the world should praise the Sun, and say, the Sun is a glorious creature, yet all this would adde nothing to the light and glory of the Sun; so, though all the Saints and Angels shall be blessing, and praising, and admiring, and worshipping of God to all eternity, yet they shall never be able to adde any thing to God, who is blessed for ever. O Christians, God is an all-sufficient portion, his power is all-sufficient to protect you, his wisdome is all-sufficient to direct you, his mercy is all-sufficient to pardon you, his goodnesse is all-sufficient to provide for you, his word is all-sufficient to support you and strengthen you, and his grace is all-sufficient to adorn you and enrich you, and his spirit is all-sufficient to lead you and comfort you; and what can you desire more? O Sirs, God hath within himself all the good of Angels, of men, and universal nature; he hath all glory, all dignity, all riches, all trea-

treasures, all pleasures, all delights, all comforts, all contents, all joyes, all beatitudes in himself. All the scattered excellencies and perfections that be in the creatures are eminently, transcendently, and perfectly in him. Look as the worth and value of many pieces of silver are contracted in one piece of gold; so all the whole volume of perfections which is spread through heaven and earth are epitomized in God, according to that old saying, *Omne bonum in summo bono*, all good is in the chiefest good. God is one infinite perfection in himself, which is eminently and virtually all perfections of the creatures: all the good, the excellency, the beauty, and glory that is in all created beings, are but parts of that whole that is in God; and all the good that is in them is borrowed and derived from God, who is the first cause, and the universal cause of all that good that is in Angels or men. God is a sufficient portion to se-

God is *Omnia super omnia*, and many of the very heathens counted God *Optimum maximum*, the best and greatest.

cure your souls, and to supply all your wants, and to satisfie all your desires, and to answer all your expectations, and to suppresse all your enemies, and after all to bring you to glory; and what can you desire more?

But now all earthly portions are insufficient portions, they can neither prevent afflictions, nor support the soul under afflictions, nor mitigate afflictions, nor yet deliver a man from afflictions: They can neither arm the soul against temptations, nor comfort the soul under temptations, nor lead the soul out of temptations. All the creatures in the world are but as so many ciphers without God; when God frowns, all the creatures in the world are not sufficient to chear the soul, when God withdraws, all the creatures in the world are not sufficient to sustain the soul; when God clouds his

A golden crown cannot cure the head-ach, nor a purple robe cannot fray away a burning feaver, nor a bed of gold cannot give ease to a distempered body, nor the velvet slipper cannot take away the pain of the gout.

his face, all the creatures in the world are not sufficient to make it day with the soul, &c. There is not enough in the whole creation to content, quiet, or satisfie one immortal soul; he that hath most of the world would have more, and he that hath least of the world hath enough, if his soul can but groundedly say, *The Lord is my portion.* But

4. Fourthly, As the Lord is an all-sufficient portion, so the Lord is a most absolute, needful, and necessary portion; the want of an earthly portion may trouble me, but the want of God for my portion will damn me; 'tis not absolutely necessary that I should have a portion in gold, or silver, or jewels, or goods, or lands; but 'tis absolutely necessary that I should have God for my portion. I may have union and communion with God, though with the Apostles I have neither gold nor silver in my purse; I may be holy and happy, though with *Lazarus* I have never

Act. 3. 6.

Luk 16. 20, 21.

a rag to hang on my back, nor never a dry crust to put into my belly; I may to heaven at last, and I may be glorious in another world, though with *Job* I should be stript of all my worldly glory, and set upon a dunghil in this world; but I can never be happy here, nor blessed hereafter, except God be my portion. Though I could truly say, that all the world were mine, yet if I could not truly say, that the Lord is my portion, I should be but miserable under all my worldly enjoyments. To have God for my portion is absolutely necessary, for without it I am for ever and ever undone: *Ephes.* 2.12. In this verse you have several *withouts*; and 'tis very observable that they that were without God in the world, they were without Christ, without the Church, without the Covenant, without the Promise, and without hope in the world: and therefore such persons must needs be in a most sad and deplorable condition, &c.

Job 1, &c.

First

First, in relation to the soul, and in relation to salvation, God is the most absolute necessary portion; if God be not my portion, my soul can never enjoy communion with him in this world; if God be not my portion, my soul can never be saved by him in the other world. But 1.

Secondly, When sinners are under terrours and horrours of conscience, when their consciences are awakened and convinced of the vilenesse of their natures, of the unspeakable evil that is in sin, yea in the least sin, and of their lost, undone, and miserable estate out of Christ; O then, what would they not give to have God for their portion? O then they would give all the gold and silver they have in the world to have God for their portion; O then they would give thousands of Rams, and ten thousands of Rivers of oil; yea, they would give their first-born, they would give the very fruit of their bodies, that they might have God to be the portion 2.

Una gutula malæ conscientiæ totum mare mundani gaudii absorbet. Luther.

Mic. 6. 6, 7

portion of their ſouls; O then they would ſay as *Mephibosheth* ſaid unto the King, *Let Ziba take all, forasmuch as my Lord the King is come again in peace unto his own houſe.* Under diſtreſſe of conſcience poor ſinners will cry out, O! let who will take all our honours, and all our mannors, and all our treaſures, and all our ſtores, and all our lands, and all our lordſhips, and all our bags, ſo we may have God for our portion: O let us but have God for our portion, and we care not a ſtraw who takes all. Now what doth this ſpeak out but that of all portions God is the moſt abſolute neceſſary portion.

2 Sam. 19. 29,30.

3. But

Thirdly, Upon a dying bed, an awakened ſinner ſets the higheſt price, value, and eſteem upon ſuch as have God for their portion: Now he eſteems a Saint in rags that hath God for his portion above a wicked Emperour in his royal Robes, who hath onely the world for his portion: What though

though wicked men, when they are in the height of their worldly prosperity, felicity, and glory, do slight the Saints, and revile, and scorn the Saints, and contemn and undervalue the Saints; yet when death knocks at their doors, and when their consciences are startled, and when hell-fire flashes in their faces, and when the worm within begins to gnaw: O now, if all the world were a lump of gold, and in their hands to dispose of, they would give it all, so they might have that honour and happinesse to change conditions with those who have God for their portion: *Num.* 23. 10. *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.* Though men who have their portion in this life do not love to live the life of the righteous, yet when they come to die, they are often desirous that they might die the death of the righteous: And this many hundred Ministers and Christians can witnesse from their own experience.

Lament. 2. 14, 15. Zeph. 2. 8, 9, 10, &c.

Laza-

Lazarus having God for his portion, when he died he went to heaven without a rag on his back, or a peny in his purſe, whereas *Dives* who had not God for his portion, when he died, went tumbling down to hell in all his riches, bravery, and glory. O 'tis infinitely better to go to heaven a begger, than to go to hell an Emperour; and this the ſinner underſtands, when his conſcience comes to be enlightened upon a dying bed, and therefore he cries out, O ſend for ſuch a Miniſter, and ſend for ſuch and ſuch a Chriſtian, and let them pray with me, and counſel me, and if it be poſſible, give me ſome drops of comfort to me; O that I had never derided nor reviled them, O that I had never oppoſed and perſecuted them, O that I had lived at ſuch a rate of holineſſe and exactneſſe as they have done, O that I had walkt with God as they have walk't, O that I had laid out my time, my ſtrength, my treaſure, my parts, my

See Wiſdom 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. All theſe verſes are worth their weight in gold.

my all, for God, as they have done, O that my eſtate was as good, as ſafe, and as happy as theirs is, O that I could as truly ſay, that the Lord is my portion, as they can ſay that the Lord is their portion: And what doth all this ſpeak out but that high eſteem and value that they ſet upon thoſe that have God for their portion: So that upon this threefold account, we may ſafely conclude, that God is a moſt abſolute, needful, and neceſſary portion. But

Fifthly, As the Lord is a moſt abſolute, needful, and neceſſary portion, ſo the Lord is a pure and unmixed portion, God is an unmixed good, he hath nothing in him but goodneſſe; he is an Ocean of ſweetneſſe, without one drop of bitterneſſe; he is a perfect beauty, without the leaſt ſpot or ſhadow of deformity. All other portions are a bitter ſweet; but God is a Roſe without prickles, he is a good, in which there is not the 5. Deut.32.4. Hab.1.13.

the leaſt evil. 1 *Joh.* 1. 5. *God is light, and in him is no darkneſſe at all.* There are no mixtures in God, God is a moſt clear bright ſhining light, yea, he is all light, and in him is no darkneſſe at all. God is all light, and all love, all ſweetneſſe, and all goodneſſe, all kindneſſe and all graciouſneſſe, and there is no uncomlineſs, no unlovelineſſe, no bitterneſſe nor no darkneſs at all in God. The Moon when it ſhines brighteſt hath her dark ſpots and ſpecks; but God is a light that ſhines moſt glorioufly without the leaſt ſpot or ſpeck: God is a moſt pure, clear, ſplendid light. 'Tis very obſervable, that the Apoſtle, to illuſtrate the perfect purity of God, adds a Negative to his Affirmative, *in him is no darkneſſe at all*; that is, God is ſo pure, that not the leaſt ſpot, the ſmalleſt ſpeck of vanity or folly can cleave to him: God is a pure, a moſt pure act, without the leaſt potentiality, defectability, or mutability, and therefore in the higheſt

eſt ſenſe *he is light, and in him is no darkneſſe at all.* By this Metaphorical deſcription of God the Apoſtle would not have us think, that the nature of God is changed into the nature of light; but by this ſimilitude the Apoſtle would repreſent ſomething of the purity and excellency of God to us. The Sun is light, the Moon is light, and the Stars are light; but it would be blaſphemy for us to imagine, that the eſſence of God is the ſame with this of the creatures: but this Sirs you muſt remember, that there are many excellent properties of light, for which God is often in the Scripture reſembled to light. As

Firſt, light is pure, and ſo is God, *Hab.* 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* There are four things that God cannot do. 1.

1. He cannot lie.
2. He cannot die.
3. He cannot deny himſelf, nor
4. He cannot look with a favourable

vourable eye upon iniquity: he is a God of that infinite purity, that he can't look upon iniquity, but with an hateful eye, an angry eye, a revengeful eye, and with a vindictive eye.

2. Secondly, All things are conspicuous to the light, and so they are to God: *Heb.* 4. 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to doe.* The Greek word τετραχηλισμένα, is a Metaphor, say some, that is taken from the Priests under the Law, who when they killed the beasts for sacrifice, all things that were within the beasts were laid naked and bare before the Priest, that so he might see what was sound, and what was corrupted. Others say, the Apostle alludes to the anatomizing of such creatures, wherein men are very cautious and curious to finde out every little vein or muscle, though they lie never so close

Psal. 41. 12. 1 Sam. 2. 1, 3 Psal. 16. 8. Psal. 119. 168. God is *totus oculus*, all eye. *Athenodorus* an heathen could say, that God was every where, and beheld all that was done.

other

others say, that 'tis a Metaphor taken from those that lie with their faces upwards, that all passengers may see who they are. All agree in this, that all mens in-sides and out-sides are anatomized, dissected, quartered, and laid naked to the eye of God, *Job* 34. 21, 22. *For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and he seeth all his goings: There is no darknesse, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* If thou canst not hide thy self from the Sun, which is Gods Minister of light, how impossible will it be to hide thy self from him whose eyes are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, saith *Ambrose*. But

Thirdly, Without light nothing can be seen; so without the beams of heavenly light no heavenly things can be seen: a man cannot see God, but in that light that comes down from above; a man cannot see Christ without he be first inlightened by Christ; a man cannot see heaven, but in that 3. Jam. 1. 17.

light that comes from heaven, 1 *Cor.*2.10,12,14,15,16. Were it not for the Sun it would be perpetual night in the world, notwithſtanding all the Torches that could be lighted, yea, notwithſtanding all the light of the Moon and Stars: ſo it would be perpetual night with poor ſouls, notwithſtanding all the torch-light of natural parts, and creature-comforts, and notwithſtanding all the Star-light of civil honeſty and common gifts, and notwithſtanding all the Moon-light of temporary faith and formal profeſſion, did not the Sun of righteouſneſſe ariſe and ſhine upon them. But

4. Fourthly, There is nothing more pleaſant than the light, *Eccleſ.* 11.7. *Truly the light is ſweet, and 'tis a very pleaſant thing to behold the Sun.* A Philoſopher being ask't whether it were not a pleaſant thing to behold the Sun? anſwered, that that was a blind mans queſtion, becauſe life without light is but a life-leſſe life. Now as there

there is nothing more pleaſant and delightful to the eye than light, ſo there is nothing more pleaſant and delightful to the ſoul than God. The poor Northern Nations in *Strabo* that want the light of the Sun for ſome moneths together, when the term of his return approaches, they climb up into the higheſt mountains to ſpie it, and he that ſpies it firſt was accounted the beſt and moſt beloved of God, they choſe him King almoſt as the *Tyrians* did *Strato*. Now the return of the Sun is not more pleaſant and delightful to thoſe poor Northern Nations, than God is pleaſant and delightful to all gracious ſouls. But

Fifthly, The light ſhines and ſcatters its rays over all the world, over Eaſt, Weſt, North, and South; and ſo doth the preſence and goodneſſe of God, *Pſal.* 139. But. 5.

Sixthly, The light is a creature of a moſt reſplendent beauty, luſtre, and glory, it dazles the eyes 6.

of the beholders; and ſo God is a God of that tranſcendent beauty, majeſty, and glory, that the very eyes of the Angels are dazled, as not being able to behold the brightneſs of his glory, *Iſa.* 6. 2. God dwells in that light, which no man can approach unto. But

7. Seventhly, and laſtly, the light of all bodies is the moſt incompound light, it will never mix with darkneſſe; no more will God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. *What communion hath light with darkneſſe?* the nature of God is void of all compoſition, light expells darkneſs, it never mixes nor mingles with it. By what hath been ſaid, you ſee that God is a pure, and an unmixed light, and that in him there is no darkneſs at all.

But now all worldly portions are mixt with many troubles, ſorrows, cares, fears, hazards, dangers, vexations, oppoſitions, croſſes, loſſes, and often times with many gripes of conſcience too.

All

All earthly portions are mixt portions, the goodneſſe of all creatures is a mixt goodneſs, our wine is mixt with water, our ſilver with tin, our gold with droſs, our wheat with chaffe, and our honey with gall, &c. every Bee hath his ſting, and every roſe hath his prickles; and this mixture ſpeaks out all earthly portions to be *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, 1 *Eccleſ.* 1. 13. That great Prince *Exerxes* was wont to ſay, You look upon my Crown, and my purple robes; but did you know how they were lin'd with thorns, you would not ſtoop to take them up. And who is there in this our *Engliſh Iſrael*, that cannot with both hands ſubſcribe to this? The Emblem of King *Henry* the ſeventh in all his buildings (in the windows) was ſtill a Crown in a buſh of thorns; wherefore, or with what hiſtorical alluſion he did ſo is uncertain; but ſurely it was to imply thus much, that great places are not free from great cares, that no man

All earthly riches are true gardens of *Adonis*, where we can gather nothing but trivial flowers ſurrounded with many briars and thornes.

B. *Hall.*

knows the weight of a Scepter, but he that ſwayes it: This made *Saul* to hide himſelf amongſt the ſtuff, when he ſhould have been made King; many a ſleepleſſe night, many a reſtleſſe day, many a ſad temptation, and many a buſie ſhift will their ambition coſt them that affect ſuch places of eminency. Beſides, high places are commonly very ſlippery, he that ſtands in them may ſuddenly fall, and wound his conſcience, or eaſily fall and break his neck. But

6. Sixthly, As God is a pure and unmixed portion, ſo he is a glorious, a happy, and a bleſſed portion, he is ſo in himſelf, and he makes them ſo too who enjoy him for their portion, *Pſal.* 33. 12. *Bleſſed is the nation whoſe God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath choſen for his own inheritance.* All the happineſſe and bleſſedneſſe of the people of God ſtands in this, that God is their God, and that he is their portion, and that they are

Pſal. 16. 5, 6.

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his inheritance. The Hebrew word *Ashrei* (that is here rendered *blessed*) is, O the blessednesse! or, O the heaped up happinesse of those whose God is the Lord! the happinesse of such is so great, and so glorious, as cannot be conceived, as cannot be uttered: the words are a joyful acclamation for their felicity that have God for their portion. *Ps.* 144. 15. *Happy is that people that is in such a case, yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord.* *David* having prayed for many temporal blessings in the behalf of the people, from *ver.* 12. to *ver.* 15. at last concludes, *Blessed are the people that are in such a case*; but presently he checks and corrects himself, and eats (as it were) his own words, but rather *happy is that people whose God is the Lord*: The Syriack rendereth it question-wise, *Is not the people that is in such a case?* the answer is *No*, except they have God to boot. Nothing can make that man truly miserable that hath God for his portion, nor nothing can

P Psal. 146. 5

can make that man truly happy that wants God for his portion. God is the Author of all true happineſs, he is the donor of all true happineſs, he is the maintainer of all true happineſs, and he is the center of all true happineſs and bleſſedneſs; and therefore he that hath him for his God, for his portion, is the onely happy man in the world.

But now all earthly portions cannot make a man truly happy and bleſſed; a Crown, a Kingdome cannot, for *Saul* and other Princes have found it ſo; Honours cannot, for *Haman* and others have found it ſo; A high and noble birth cannot, for *Abſalom*, *Ammon*, and others have found it ſo; Riches cannot, for the rich fool in the Goſpel and many thouſand others have found it ſo; Large Dominions, and great commands cannot, for *Ahaſuerus*,

If a man ſhould make a critical enquiry after true happineſſe, from the higheſt Angel in heaven to the loweſt worm on earth, the joynt voice of all the creatures would be, that happineſſe is not in them.

ſuerus, Nebuchadnezzar, Belſhazzar, and others have found it ſo; Policy cannot, for *Achitophel* and other great Counſellors have found it ſo; Glorious apparel and delicate fare cannot, for *Dives* and others have found it ſo; Applauſe and credit among the people cannot, for *Herod* and others have found it ſo; Learning and great gifts cannot, for the Scribes, Phariſes, and many others have found it ſo: no earthly thing nor earthly creature can give happineſs and bleſſedneſs to man; *Non dat quod non habet*, Nothing can give what it hath not. If the Conduit hath no water, it can give no water; if the Sun hath no light, it can give no light; if the Phyſician hath no remedy, he can give no remedy, &c.

But now 'tis a very true obſervation, though it be a very ſad Obſervation, *viz. That every wicked mans portion is curſt unto him.*

Do but compare the Scriptures in the margine together, and then let

Deut. 28. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Job 20.22, 23,26,28, 29. and chap.24.18 Prov. 3.33 Mal.2.2, &c.

let conſcience judge. All a wicked mans relations are curſt to him, and all a wicked mans contentments and enjoyments are curſt to him, all his mercies without doors are curſt to him, and all his mercies within doores are curſt to him, &c. What though a man ſhould match with one that hath many thouſand bags of gold for her portion, yet if the plague ſhould be in every bag, would you count him happy in his match? ſurely no. Verily this is the caſe of every man that hath not God for his portion. But

7.

Pſal. 16. 5. Pſal.142.5, 6. Jer.10.16.

Seventhly, As God is a glorious portion, ſo he is a peculiar portion, he is a portion peculiar to his people. This is evident in the Text, and in all the Scriptures cited to prove the Point, and ſo in that, *Pſal. 67. 6. Then ſhall the earth yield her increaſe, and God, even our own God ſhall bleſſe us:* and ſo *Pſal. 68. 20. He that is our God is the God of ſalvation*, or *God of ſalvations*, as 'tis in the He-

Hebrew. God is a God of all manner of salvations, he hath all sorts and wayes of salvations, he is not only powerful, but also skilful to save his people from ten thousand deaths and dangers. Faith is an appropriating grace, it is much in appropriating of God to its self, my Lord, and my God, and my Redeemer, and my Saviour, and my portion, *Psal.* 73. 26. *My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.* In *Gideons* Camp every Souldier had his own pitcher; amongst *Solomons* men of valour every man wore his own sword; and the five wise Virgins had every one oil in her own lamp. *Luther* was wont to say, that there lay a great deal of Divinity couched up in pronouns, as in *meum, tuum, suum,* mine, thine, his: and so faiths appropriating of God to the soul, as its own portion, is all in all. God is a portion peculiar to the Saints, he is the hidden Manna, the new Name, the white Stone,

Joh. 20. 28. Job 19. 25. Luke 1. 47.

Judg. 7.

1 Chron. 26. 30. Mat. 25. 4.

Stone, the bread to eat that others know not of: There is never a hardned *Pharaoh* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a murdering *Saul* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a painted bloody *Jezabel* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a cunning *Achitophel* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a proud *Haman* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a tyrannical *Nebuchadnezzar* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a crafty *Herod* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a rich *Dives* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a treacherous *Judas* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never an hypocritical *Simon Magus* in the world that can truly

say

say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never an Apostatizing *Demas* in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*; nor there is never a persecuting Scribe or Pharisee in the world that can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*: 'tis only the Saint that can truly say, *The Lord is his portion*, for God is peculiarly his, he is only his.

But now all earthly portions are common portions, they are all common to good and bad, to the righteous and to the wicked, to the clean and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not, to him that sweareth, and to him that feareth an oath. Was *Abraham* rich? so was *Dives* to; was *David* a King? so was *Saul* to; was *Daniel* a great favourite at Court? so was *Haman* to, &c. And indeed usually the basest and the worst of men have the largest share in earthly portions: which made *Luther* say, that the whole Turkish Empire was

Eccles. 9. 1, 2, 3. 4

was but a cruſt that God caſt to a dog. *Abraham* gave unto his ſons of the Concubines gifts, and ſent them away, but unto *Iſaac* he gave all that he had: So all earthly portions which are giftleſſe gifts God gives them to the worſt and vildeſt of men; *Dan.* 4. 17. *This matter is by the Decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know, that the moſt High ruleth in the Kingdome of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will, and ſetteth up over it the baſeſt of men*: and ſo in that, *Dan.* 11.21. *And in his eſtate ſhall ſtand up a vile perſon, to whom they ſhall not give the honour of the Kingdome, but he ſhall come in peaceably, and obtain the Kingdome by flatteries.* Interpreters do generally agree, that by this vile perſon in the Text is meant *Antiochus Epiphanes*, that was ſo great and mighty a Prince, that when the *Samaritans* did write to him, they write *Antiocho magno Deo*, to *Antiochus* the great God. And indeed his very name

Gen. 25.5, 6.

ſpeaks

ſpeaks him out to be ſome great and glorious perſon, for *Antiochus Epiphanes* is *Antiochus* the illuſtrious, the famous; and yet you ſee that the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaking of him, calls him a vile perſon. Ah, how vile in the eyes of God are the greateſt men in the world who have not God for their portion! *Auguſtus* in his ſolemn Feaſts gave trifles to ſome, but gold to others; God gives the trifling portions of this world to the vileſt and worſt of men, but his gold, his Chriſt, himſelf, he gives onely to his Saints, *Gal.* 2.20. *And the life which I now live in the fleſh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Hawes that are for hogs grow upon every hedge, but roſes that are for men they onely grow in pleaſant gardens; you know how to apply it: Though many have counterfeit jewels, yet there are but a few that have the true Diamond; though many have their earthly portions, yet there are but a few

that have God for their portion. But

8. Eighthly, As God is a peculiar portion, ſo he is a univerſal portion; he is a portion that includes all other portions: God hath in himſelf the good, the ſweet, the profit, the pleaſure, the delight, the comfort, &c. of all portions; there is no good in wife, child, father, friend, husband, health, wealth, wit, wiſdome, learning, honour, &c. but is all found in God, *Rev.* 21.7. *He that overcometh ſhall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon*; or as the Greek hath it, ὁ νικῶν, He that is overcoming; though he hath not yet overcome, yet if he be ſtriving for the conqueſt, and will rather die than he will give up the Bucklers, *he ſhall inherit all things*, that is, he ſhall inherit God in all, and all in God, *Gen.* 33. 9. *And* Eſau *ſaid, I have enough, my brother, keep that thou haſt unto thy ſelf*; or as the Hebrew hath it, *Li Rab, I have much my brother*: and indeed 'twas very

Rom. 8 32. God is the *bonum in qua omnia bona.*

Qui habet hoc unum, habet unum univerſale.

very much that an *Eſau* ſhould ſay he had much; 'tis more than many of the *Eſaus* of theſe times will ſay: but *Jacob* ſpeaks at a far higher rate in *ver.* 11. *Take, I pray thee, my bleſſing that is brought to thee, becauſe God hath dealt graciouſly with me, and becauſe I have enough*; or rather as the Hebrew hath it, *Li chol, I have all*; *Eſau* had much, but *Jacob* had all, becauſe he had all in God, and God in all; *Habet omnia qui habet habentem omnia*, He hath all that hath the haver of all; 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things.* There is in God an immenſe fulneſſe, an Ocean of goodneſſe, and an overplus of all that graciouſneſſe, ſweetneſſe, and kindneſſe that is to be found in all other things or creatures. As *Noah* had a copy of every kind of creature in that famous Library of the Ark, out of which all were re-printed to the world; ſo he that hath God for his portion hath the original copy of all bleſſings, out of which all

may easily be renewed; all the goodlinesses and all the glories of all the creatures are eminently and perfectly to be enjoyed in God; God is an universal excellency; all the particular excellencies that are scattered up and down among Angels, men, and all other creatures are virtually & transcendently in him; he hath them all in his own being. All creatures in heaven and earth have but their particular excellencies, but God hath in himself the very quintescence of all excellencies; the creatures have but drops of that Sea, that Ocean that is in God, they have but their parts of that power, wisdome, goodnesse, righteousnesse, holinesse, faithfulnesse, lovelinesse, desireableness, sweetnesse, graciousnesse, beauty, and glory that is in God; one hath this part, and another hath that, one

Ephes. 1.3.

When *Paulinus Nolanus* a great man, had his City taken away, from him by the *Barbarians*, he prayed thus; Lord, let me not be troubled at the losse of my Gold, Silver, Honour, &c. for thou art all, and much more than all these to me.

one hath this particular excellency, and another hath that; but the whole of all these parts and excellencies are to be found only in God. There is none but that God that is an universal good, that can truly say, all power, all wisdome, all strength, all knowledge, all goodness, all sweetness, all beauty, all glory, all excellency, &c. dwells in me; he that can truly say this, is a God, and he that cannot is no God. There is no Angel in heaven nor Saint on earth that hath the whole of any one of those excellencies that are in God; nay, all the Angels in heaven, and all the Saints on earth have not among them the whole of any one of all those glorious excellencies and perfections that be in God. All the excellencies that are scattered up and down in the creatures are united into one excellency in God; but there is not one excellency in God that is fully scattered up and down among all the creatures: There is

a glorious union of all excellencies in God, and onely in God.

Now this God that is ſuch an univerſal good, and that hath all excellencies dwelling in himſelf, he ſayes to the believer, as the King of *Iſrael* ſaid to the King of *Aſſyria, I am thine, and all that I have;* our propriety reacheth to all that God is, and to all that God hath. God is not parted, nor divided, nor diſtributed among his people, as earthly portions are divided among children in the family; ſo as one believer hath one part of God, and another believer another part of God, and a third another part of God; O no, but every believer hath whole God wholly, he hath all of God for his portion. God is not a believers portion in a limited ſenſe, nor in a comparative ſenſe, but in an abſolute ſenſe; God himſelf is theirs, he is wholly theirs, he is only theirs, he is alwayes theirs. As Chriſt looks upon the Father, and ſaith

1 Kings 20. 4.
Jer 32. 38, -42.

ſaith, *All thine is mine, and mine is thine*, that may a Saint ſay, looking upon God as his portion, he may truly ſay, O Lord thou art mine, and all that thou haſt, and I am thine, and all that I have: A Saint may look upon God, and ſay, O Lord, not only thy gifts and thy graces are mine to adorn me and enrich me, and not only thy mercies and thy good things are mine to comfort me and encourage me, but alſo thou thy ſelf art mine; and this is my joy and crown of rejoycing: to be able to ſay that God is mine, is more than if I were able to ſay, that ten thouſand worlds, yea, and as maheavens are mine: for 'tis God alone that is the ſparkling Diamond in the Ring of glory. Heaven would be but a low thing without God, ſaith *Auguſtine*; and *Bernard* had rather enjoy Chriſt in a Chimney-corner, than to be in Heaven without him; and *Luther* had rather be in Hell with Chriſt, than in Heaven without him:

Joh 17.10. 1Cor.3 ult.

him: 'tis God alone that makes heaven to be heaven.

Now God is ſo every particular believers portion, as that he is every believers portion; 1 *Cor.* 1. 1,2. Paul *called to be an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, through the will of God, and* Soſthenes *our brother, unto the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *to them that are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, both theirs and ours.* As the Sun is every mans Sun to ſee by, to walk by, to work by; and as the Sea is every mans Sea to trade by, &c. ſo God is every believers portion; he is a poor Saints portion, as well as a rich Saints portion; he is the deſpiſed believers portion, as well as the exalted believers portion; he is the weak believers portion, as well as the ſtrong believers portion; he was as much his portion who miſcall'd his faith, and who in the behalf of his ſon cried out with tears

tears, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*, as he was *Abrahams* portion, who in the ſtrength of his faith offered up his only ſon; he was as much *Jobs* portion ſitting on a dunghil, as he was *Davids* portion ſitting on a royal Throne; he was as much *Lazarus* his portion that had never a penny in his purſe as he was *Solomons* portion, who made gold and ſilver as plenteous in *Jeruſalem* as the ſtones of the ſtreets. God is not my portion alone, but he is every Saints portion in heaven, and he is every Saints portion on earth: The Father is every childs portion, and though they may wrangle, and quarrel, and fall out one with another, yet he is all their portions; and ſo 'tis here: and O what a ſpring of joy and comfort ſhould this be to all the Saints. Riches are not every believers portion, but God is every believers portion; honour and preferment in the world is not every believers portion, but God is every believers portion; Lo-

Mar. 9.24.

Geneſ. 22.

2 Chron. 1. 15.

Liberty and freedome is not every believers portion, but God is every believers portion; credit and applauſe in the world is not every believers portion, but God is every believers portion; proſperity and ſucceſſe is not every believers portion, but God is every believers portion, &c.

God is a univerſal portion, all things receive their being, eſſence, and exiſtence from him, for the fulneſſe of all things is in him really and eminently. The Heathen Philoſophers of old called God τὸ πᾶν, *i. e.* all or every thing, and in that Oracle great *Pan* is dead, of which *Plutarch* makes mention: Chriſt is called the great *Pan*, becauſe, ſay ſome, he is the Lord of all, and containeth all things in himſelf, *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will make all my goodneſſe paſſe before thee*, to wit, becauſe in God are all good things; God is all things, God is every thing; the cream, the good, the ſweet, the beauty, and the glory of every crea-

creature, and of every thing centers in God. But

Ninthly, As God is an univerſal portion, ſo God is a ſafe portion, a ſecure portion, he is a portion that none can rob or wrong you of, he is a portion that none can touch or take from you, he is a portion that none can cheat or ſpoil you of; God is ſuch a portion, that no friend, no foe, no man, no enemy, no Devil can ever rob a Chriſtian of. O Chriſtians, God is ſo yours in Chriſt, and ſo yours by Covenant, and ſo yours by promiſe, and ſo yours by purchaſe, and ſo yours by conqueſt, and ſo yours by donation, and ſo yours by marriage-union and communion, and ſo yours by the earneſt of the Spirit, and ſo yours by the ſealings and witneſſings of the Spirit, that no power or policy on earth can ever finger your portion, or cheat, or rob you of your portion, *Pſal.* 48. 14. *For this God is our God for ever and ever, and he will be our guide even unto death*: he is not

9.

These things I have formerly handled more largely, and therefore a touch here muſt ſuffice, &c.

not only our God for the preſent, nor he will not be only our God for a ſhort time longer: O no; but he will be our God for ever and ever; If God be once thy portion, he will be for ever thy portion. It muſt be a power that muſt over-match the power of God, and a ſtrength that muſt be above the ſtrength of God that muſt rob or ſpoil a Chriſtian of his portion; but who is there that is ſtronger than God? Is the clay ſtronger than the potter, or the ſtubble than the flame, or weakneſs than ſtrength? yea, is not the very weakneſſe of God ſtronger than man? and who then ſhall ever be able to take away a Chriſtians portion from him?

Rom. 9.

1 Cor. 1.25. &ch. 10.22

But now a man may be eaſily deprived of his earthly portion; how many have been deprived of their earthly portions by ſtorms at Sea, and others by force and violence, and others by fraud and deceit, and others by hideous lying and

and hellish swearing? many have lost their earthly portions by treachery, knavery, perjury, subtilty, robbery, &c. Some play away their earthly portions, and others with *Esau* fool away their earthly portions, and not a few, with the prodigal, sin away their earthly portions. *Ahabs* fingers itch't to be a fingering of *Naboths* Vineyard; a man can no sooner come to enjoy an earthly portion, but other mens fingers itch to be a fingering of his portion, as daily experience doth sufficiently evidence. But God is a portion that the fire cannot burn, nor the floods cannot drown, nor the thief cannot steal, nor the enemy cannot sequester, nor the souldier cannot plunder a Christian of; a man may take away my gold from me, but he cannot take away my God from me. The *Chaldeans* and the *Sabeans* could take away *Jobs* estate from him, but they could not take away *Jobs* God from him. And the *Amalekites* burnt *Ziklag*, and robb'd

Luke 15.

1 Kings 21. 1--5.

Job 1.

1 Sam. 30. robb'd *David* of his substance, and of his wives, but they could not rob him of his God: And those persecuters in the 10. and 11. Chapters of the *Hebrews* plundered the Saints of their goods; but they could not plunder them of their God: Till weakness can make a breach upon strength, impotency upon omnipotency, the pitcher upon the potter, and the crawling worm upon the Lord of Hosts, a Saints portion is safe and secure. 'Tis true, sicknesses and diseases may take away my health and my strength from me, and death may take away my friends and my relations from me, and enemies may take away my estate, my liberty, my life from me, but none of all these can take away my God from me. I have read of the men of *Tyrus*, how that they chained and nailed their God *Apollo* to a post, that so they might be sure of him, supposing that all their safety lay in the enjoyment of him. Certainly God is so chain-

chained, and so linked, and so nailed to his people by his everlasting love, and by his everlasting Covenant, and by the blood of his Son, and by his Oath, and by that law of relation that is between him and them, that no created power shall ever be able to deprive them of him. But

Tenthly, As God is a safe portion, a secure portion, so he is a suitable portion; no object is so suitable and adequate to the heart as he is; he is a portion that punctually, exactly, and directly suits the condition of the soul, that suits the desires of the soul, the necessities of the soul, the wants of the soul, the longings of the soul, and the prayers of the soul: the soul can crave nothing, nor wish for nothing, but what is to be found in this portion; here is light to inlighten the soul, and wisdom to counsel the soul, and power to support the soul, and goodness to supply the soul; and mercy to pardon

10. Psal. 4.6,7.

don the ſoul, and beauty to delight the ſoul, and glory to raviſh the ſoul, and fulneſſe to fill the ſoul, &c. Health is not more ſuitable to the ſick man, nor wealth to the poor man, nor bread to the hungry man, nor drink to the thirſty man, nor cloathes to the naked man, nor balme to the wounded man, nor eaſe to the tormented man, nor health to the diſeaſed man, nor a pardon to the condemned man, nor a guide to the blind man, &c. then this portion is ſuitable to all the neceſſities of man; and this ſpeaks out the excellency of this portion above all other portions. Now there is no earthly portion that can ſuit an immortal ſoul; he is a fool upon record that ſaid, *Soul, thou haſt goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* If the man, ſaith *Ambroſe* upon the words, had had the ſoul of a Swine, what could he have ſaid more? for thoſe things were more ſuitable to Swine than they were

Luke 12. 18, 19, 20.

were to an immortal ſoul: mans ſoul is a ſpiritual and immortal ſubſtance, 'tis capable of union and communion with God, 'tis capable of a choice enjoyment of God here, and of an eternal fruition of God hereafter. A great ſhooe will not fit a little foot, nor a great Sail a little Ship, nor a great Ring a little finger, no more will any earthly portion ſuit an immortal ſoul. The ſoul is the breath of God, the beauty of man, the wonder of Angels, and the envy of Devils, 'tis of an Angelical nature, 'tis an heavenly ſpark, a celeſtial plant, and of a divine off-ſpring; ſo that nothing can ſuit the ſoul below God, nor nothing can ſatisfie the ſoul without God: the ſoul is ſo high and ſo noble a piece that all the riches of the Eaſt and Weſt *Indies*, nor Rocks of Diamonds, nor mountains of gold can fill it, or ſatisfie it, or ſuit it.

When a man is in priſon, and condemned to die, if one ſhould

come to him, and tell him, that there is ſuch a friend or ſuch a relation that hath left him a very fair eſtate, a brave Seat, &c. yet all this would not pleaſe him, nor joy him, becauſe it doth not ſuit his preſent condition; O but now let a man bring him his pardon ſealed under his Princes hand, O how will this delight him and joy him? and all becauſe it ſuits him. And ſo tell a man that is ready to ſtarve, that ſuch and ſuch loves him, and that ſuch and ſuch intends well towards him, &c. yet all this doth not take him, it doth not ſatisfie him, and all becauſe it doth not ſuit him; O but now do but bring him food to eat, and this will joy him and delight him, and all becauſe it ſuits him; that is the higheſt good that is the moſt ſuitable good to the ſoul, and ſuch a good is God; that is the moſt excellent portion that is the moſt ſuitable portion to the ſoul, and ſuch a portion is God. But

Eleventhly,

Eleventhly, As God is a ſuitable portion, ſo he is an incomprehenſible portion; no created underſtanding can comprehend what a portion God is: 'tis true God is not incomprehenſible, in regard of his own underſtanding, for he perfectly underſtands himſelf, and comprehends himſelf, elſe he could not be God; but God is incomprehenſible, in regard of us, and the Angels, who are no wayes able to comprehend infiniteneſs, 1 *Kings* 8. 27. *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much leſſe this houſe that I have builded?* God is an infinite being, and therefore he cannot be contained in any place, nor comprehended by any created being; ſuch multiplied phraſes and Hebraiſms as are here, as heaven, and the heaven of heavens, do very emphatically

Pſal. 147. 5. Job 26. 14.

Ariſtotle that great Secretary of Nature being not able to comprehend the reaſon of the Seas ebbing and flowing, caſt himſelf into it; O how much leſſe able was he to comprehend God bleſſed for ever.

set out the immensity and incomprehensibleneſſe of God, *Job* 36. 23. *Touching the Almighty we cannot finde him out*; we are as well able to comprehend the Sea in a Cockle-ſhell, as we are able to comprehend God; God is above all name, all notion, and all comprehenſion. God is ſo incomprehenſible, that you ſhall as ſoon tell the ſtars of heaven, and number the ſand of the Sea, and ſtop the Sun in his courſe, and raiſe the dead, and make a world, as you ſhall be able to comprehend the infiniteneſſe of Gods eſſence. The moſt perfect knowledge that we can have of God is, that we cannot perfectly know him, becauſe we do know him to be infinitely and incomprehenſibly perfect, *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depth both of the wiſdome and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgements, and his wayes paſt finding out!* when men and Angels do ſearch fartheſt into Gods perfection, they do then moſt of all diſcover their own imperfection;

Pſal. 145. 3. His greatneſs is unſearchable

imperfection; for 'tis utterly impossible for Angels or men by their most accurate disquisition to finde out the Almighty to perfection, *1 Tim. 6. 16. Who onely hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see*; here is a denial both of the fact, and the possibility. 'Tis a good observation of *Chrysostome* on the words, *Diligentiæ Pauli attende, non dicit lucem incomprehensibilem, &c.* Observe the diligence of *Paul*, he doth not say a light incomprehensible, but a light inaccessible, which is much more; for that which being sought and searched for, cannot be comprehended, we say is incomprehensible; but that which suffereth not by any means the labour of searching after, and which no one can come neer, that is inaccessible. There is infinitely more in God than the tongues of men or Angels can express: there is much in God beyond the apprehension and comprehension of all created beings;

Job 11. 6, 7.

If one man had all the reason, gifts, graces, and excellencies that are in Angels and men, yet would he never be able to comprehend an incomprehensible God.

ings; the summe of all that Philosophers and School-men have attained to concerning this great Principle, amounts to no more than this, *viz.* That men and Angels can never comprehend that perfection which dwells in God, for the perfection of God is infinite, and therefore incomprehensible. God (saith *Dionysius*) is a super-substantial substance, an understanding not to be understood, a word never to be spoken.

When one was ask't, what God was? he answered, that he must be God himself, before he could know God fully.

Simonides apud Ciceronem, Lib. 1. de Nat. Deorum.

When the Tyrant (*Hiero*) asked the Poet (*Simonides*) what God was? he craved a day to study an answer; but the more he sought into the nature of God, the more difficult he found it to expresse: the next day after being questioned, he asked two dayes, and the third time he craved four, and so went on, doubling the number; and being ask't, why he did so? he an-

anſwered, that the more he ſtudied the nature of God, the leſſe he was able to define what God was, he being ſo incomprehenſible in his nature; the more this poor Heathen inquired, the more he admired, and the leſſe he underſtood.

'Twas a notable Obſervation of *Chryſoſtome*, who being very buſie and ſtudious in ſearching into the nature of God, ſaith, I am like a man digging in a deep ſpring; I ſtand here, and the water riſeth upon me, and I ſtand there, and ſtill the water riſeth upon me. Indeed this is a knowledge that paſſeth knowledge, *Epheſ.* 3. 19.

The *Turks* build their Moſchies or Churches without any roof, becauſe they hold (as we do) that God is incomprehenſible: God is a circle whoſe center is every where, and whoſe circumference is no where, all which ſpeaks out his infiniteneſſe and incomprehenſibleneſſe.

But now all earthly portions are eaſily apprehended and comprehended. A portion in money, or plate, or goods, or lands, or jewels, is eaſily caſt up, and ſo many hundreds or thouſands a year are quickly told; there are few except it be children and fools but can readily give an account of all earthly portions: the childs portion, and the wives portion, and the ſervants portion, and the ſouldiers portion, and the poor mans portion, and the rich mans portion are talk't on all the City over, and all the Town over, and all the Countrey over, but God is ſuch an incomprehenſible portion, that there is not a man in Town, City, or Countrey that is able to comprehend him, *Prov.* 3.15. But

12. Twelfthly, As God is an incomprehenſible portion, ſo God is an inexhauſtible portion, a portion that can never be ſpent, that can never be exhauſted, a fountain that ſtill overflows, a rich Myne that hath

hath no bottome, a Spring that can never be drawn dry, but continues alwayes full without augmentation or diminution: *Joh.* 4. 14. *But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him ſhall never thirſt; but the water that I ſhall give him ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up unto everlaſting life.* If grace in the ſoul be ſuch a perpetual flowing fountain, that it ſhall never be exhauſted till grace be ſwallowed up in glory; then certainly the God of grace is much more an inexhauſtible Fountaine that can never be drawn dry. Angels, Saints, and ſinners have lived upon this portion almoſt this ſix thouſand yeats, and it is not in the leaſt diminiſhed. God hath his City-houſe, and his Countrey-houſe, where millions have been kept at his table, and lived upon his purſe, his charge, even dayes without number, and yet God is not one penny the poorer for all this. This portion is like the meal in the Barrel, and the oil in the Col. 1. 16, 17.

the Cruse, which never failed; 1 *Kings* 17. 14, 16. *For thus saith the Lord God of* Israel, *the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the Cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the Earth: And the Barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the Cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by* Elijah. God is such a portion as cannot be wasted nor diminished; he is such a portion as can never fail. Should all Christians now live to the age of the Patriarchs, who lived many hundred years, and should they all live freely, and keep open house every day in the year, yet at the end, not a dram, not a penny, no not a farthing of this portion will be expended or diminished.

Though men have never so great a stock, yet if they still spend upon it they wil certainly consume it; O but God is such a stock as can never be spent, as can never be consumed. If a sparrow should but fetch a drop of water out of the

Sea

Sea once a day, yea, once in a thousand yeares, yet in time it would be exhausted: O but God is such a Sea, such an Ocean, that if every Angel in heaven, and every Saint and sinner on earth should drink whole Rivers at a draught, yet not one drop could be diminished: If a child should but take a cockle-shell of water out of the Sea every day, the Sea would be really the lesse, though not visibly the lesse, and in time it would be exhausted, and drawn dry; but let all created beings be every day a drawing from God, yet they shall never lessen him, they shall never draw him dry. The mothers breasts are often drawn dry, but the more you draw at the breasts of God, the more the milk of grace and comfort will flow in upon you: *Isa.66. 10, 11. Rejoyce ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoyce for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation, that you*

may

may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. God keeps open houſe for all commers and goers, for all created creatures both in heaven and earth; and though they are perpetually a ſucking at his breaſts, yet the more they draw the more the heavenly milk of divine joy, content, and ſatisfaction flows in abundantly upon them: All creatures, both high and low, rich and poor, honourable and baſe, noble and ignoble, bond and free, Jews and Gentiles, are all maintained upon Gods own coſt and charge, they are all fed at his Table, and maintained by what comes out of his Treaſury, his purſe; and yet God is not a pin the poorer for all this: It would break and beggar all the Princes on earth to keep but one day the leaſt part of that innumerable company that God feeds, and cloaths, and cheriſhes, and maintains every day upon the account of his own Revenue, which is never the poorer for all the vaſt expences that he

Pſal. 104. 24.

is

is daily at. There is ſtill in God a fulneſſe of abundance, and a fulneſſe of redundance, notwithſtanding the vaſt ſummes that he hath and daily doth expend. It were blaſphemy to think that God ſhould be a penny the poorer by all that he hath laid out for the maintenance of thoſe millions of Angels and men that have had their dependance upon him, from their firſt creation to this very day. Look, as the Sun hath never the leſſe light for filling the Stars with light, and as the Fountain hath never the leſſe water for filling the leſſer Veſſels with water that are about it; ſo though God fills all the Veſſels both of grace and glory with his own fulneſſe, yet he is never the leſſe full himſelf; there is ſtill in God (*plenitudo fontis*) the fulneſſe of a Fountain. Look, as the overflowing Fountain pours out water abundantly, and yet after all it remains full; ſo though the Lord be ſuch an overflowing Fountain as that he fills all, yet

ſtill

ſtill he retains all fulneſſe in himſelf.

I have read of a Spaniſh Ambaſſadour, that coming to ſee the Treaſury of Saint *Mark* in *Venice* that is ſo much cried up in the world, he fell a groping at the bottome of the Cheſts and Trunks to ſee whether they had any bottom; and being asked the reaſon, why he did ſo? anſwered in this among other things, My Maſters Treaſure differs from yours, and excells yours, in that his hath no bottome as yours have, alluding to the Mynes in *Mexico*, *Peru*, and other parts of the Weſtern *India*. All mens Mints, Bags, Purſes, and Coffers may be quickly exhauſted and drawn dry, but God is ſuch an inexhauſtible portion that he can never be drawn dry: all Gods Treaſures are bottomleſſe, and all his Mints are bottomleſſe, and all his Bags are bottomleſſe; millions of thouſands in heaven and earth feed every day upon him, and yet he feels it not, he is ſtill a

giving,

giving, and yet his purſe is never empty; he is ſtill a filling all the Court of heaven, and all the creatures on earth, and yet he is a Fountain that ſtill overflowes. There be them that ſay, that 'tis moſt certainly true of the Oil at *Rhemes*, that though it be continually ſpent in the inauguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never waſts; but whatever truth is in this ſtory, of this I am moſt ſure, that though all the creatures in both worlds live and ſpend continually on Chriſts ſtock, yet it never waſteth.

But now all earthly portions are frequently exhauſted and drawn dry; the prodigal quickly ſpent his patrimony upon his harlots; and how many Drunkards, and Gluttons, and Wantons, and Gamſters, and Royſters, &c. do daily bring a Noble to nine pence. Haſt thou entered into the Treaſures of the ſnow, (ſaith God to *Job*:) Now, ſaith *Gregory*, the trea-

Luke 15.

Prov. 23. 20, 21.

Vide Job 38. 22.

treaſures of the ſnow are worldly riches which men rake together, even as children do ſnow, which the next ſhowr waſheth away, and leaves nothing in the room of it but dirt. And ah how many Merchants, and Shop-keepers, and others in theſe breaking times, have found all their riches and earthly portions to melt away as ſnow before the Sun? how many of late have been very rich one week, and ſtript of all the next, and ſet with *Job* upon the dunghil? All earthly portions are like water in a Ciſtern that may eaſily and quickly be drawn dry; but God is an inexhauſtible portion that can never be drawn dry; and this diſcovers the excellency of this portion above all other portions. But

13. Thirteenthly, As God is an inexhauſtable portion, ſo God is a ſoul-ſatisfying portion, he is a portion that gives the ſoul full ſatisfaction and content, *Pſal.* 16. 5, 6. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheri-*

Pſal. 17. 15.

tance,

tance, and of thy cup: thou maintaineſt my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage. 'Twas as well with him as his heart could wiſh. And ſo in that *Pſal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee*; or as ſome render it, *I would I were in heaven with thee*; or as others read the words, *I have ſought none in heaven or earth beſides thee*; or as others, *I deſire none in heaven or earth but thee*; or, *I affect none in heaven, nor none on earth like thee*; *I love none in heaven, nor none on earth in compariſon of thee; I eſteem thee inſtead of all other treaſure, and above all other treaſures that are in heaven, or that are on earth.* The holy Prophet had ſpiritual and ſweet communion with Chriſt to comfort and ſtrengthen him, he had a guard of glorious Angels to protect him and ſecure him, and he had aſſurance of heaven in his boſome to joy and rejoyce him; and yet 'twas none of theſe, nay, 'twas not all theſe together that could

Vide Jerome, Calvin, Cajetan, Marlorat, Mollerius, &c.

could satisfie him; 'twas only an infinite good, an infinite God that could satisfie him; he very well knew that the substantials of all true happinesse and blessednesse did lie in God, and his enjoyment of God: 'Twas not his high dignities nor honours that could satisfie him, 'twas not the strength, riches, security, prosperity, and outward glory of his Kingdome that could satisfie him, 'twas not his delightful musick, nor his noble attendance, nor his well-furnished tables, nor his great victories, nor his stately palaces, nor his pleasant gardens, nor his beautiful wife, nor his lovely children that could satisfie him; all these without God could never satisfie him, but God without all these was enough to quiet him, and satisfie him. *Joh.* 14.8. Philip *said unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*: a sight of God will satisfie a gracious soul more than all worldly contentments and enjoyments; yea, one sight of God will

will satisfie a Saint more than all the glory of heaven will do: God is the glory of all the glory of heaven; heaven alone is not sufficient to content a gracious soul, but God alone is sufficient to content and satisfie a gracious soul: God only is that satisfying good that is able to fill, quiet, content, and satisfie an immortal soul. Certainly, if there be enough in God to satisfie the spirits of just men made perfect, whose capacities are far greater than ours; and if there be enough in God to satisfie the Angels, whose capacities are far above theirs; if there be enough in God to satisfie Jesus Christ, whose capacity is unconceivable and unexpressible; yea, if there be enough in God to satisfie himself, then certainly there must needs be in God enough to satisfie the souls of his people. If all fulnesse, and all goodnesse and infiniteneſſe will satisfie the soul, then God will: there is nothing beyond God imaginable, nor no-

Heb. 12. 23, 24, 25.

Ephef. 3. 2.

thing beyond God deſirable, nor nothing beyond God delectable; and therefore the ſoul that enjoys him cannot but be ſatisfied with him. God is a portion beyond all imagination, all expectation, all apprehenſion, and all compariſon; and therefore he that hath him cannot but ſit down and ſay, I have enough, *Pſal.* 63. 5, 6. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied, as with* * *marrow and fatneſſe, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.* Marrow and fatneſſe cannot ſo ſatisfie the appetite, as God can ſatisfie a gracious ſoul; yea, one ſmile from God, one glance of his countenance, one good word from heaven, one report of love and grace will infinitely more ſatisfie an immortal ſoul, than all the fat, and all the marrow, and all the dainties and delicates of this world can ſatisfie the appetite of any mortal man: *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied with fatneſſe and fatneſſe*; ſo the Hebrew hath it,

Gen. 33. 11. * *Cheleb vadeſhen*, Fat and fat: So the Hebrew hath it: & hereby is meant fatiety of pleaſures, &c.

it, that is, my soul shall be top-full of comfort, it shall be filled up to the brim with pleasure and delight in the remembrance and enjoyment of God upon my bed, or upon my beds, in the *plural*, as the Hebrew hath it: *David* had many a hard bed, and many a hard lodging, whilst he was in his wildernesse-condition; it oftentimes so fell out that he had nothing but the bare ground for his bed, and the stones for his pillows, and the hedges for his curtains, and the heavens for his canopy; yet in this condition God was sweeter than marrow and fatnesse to him; though his bed was never so hard, yet in God he had full satisfaction and content: *Jer.* 31.14. *My people shall be satisfied with goodness, saith the Lord. And my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus,* saith *Paul* that great Apostle of the Gentiles: the Greek word πληρώσει signifies *to fill up,* even as he did the Widdows Vessels, till they did

Phil. 4. 19.

2 Kings 4. 4.

overflow. God will fill up all, he will make up all, he will supply all the wants and neceſſities of his people. That water that can fill the Sea, can much more fill a cup; and that Sun which can fill the world with light, can much more fill my houſe with light: So that God that fills heaven and earth with his glory, can much more fill my ſoul with his glory. To ſhew what a ſatisfying portion God is, he is ſet forth by all thoſe things that may ſatisfie the heart of man, as by Bread, Water, Wine, Milk, Honours, Riches, Raiment, Houſes, Lands, Friends, Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, Health, Wealth, Light, Life, &c. And if theſe things will not ſatisfie, what will? 'Tis enough, ſayes old *Jacob*, that *Joſeph* is alive; ſo ſayes a gracious ſoul, 'Tis enough that God is my portion. A pardon cannot more ſatisfie a condemned man, nor bread an hungry man, nor drink a thirſty man, nor cloathes a naked man, nor health

Gen. 45. 28.

a sick man, &c. than God doth satisfie a gracious man. But

Now worldly portions can never satisfie the souls of men. *Eccles.* 5. 10. *He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance, with increase; this is also vanity.* All the world cannot fill the soul, nor all the creatures in the world cannot stock the soul with compleat satisfaction. As nothing can be the perfection of the soul, but he that made it; so nothing can be the satisfaction of the soul, but he that made it: If a man be hungry, silver cannot feed him; if naked, it cannot cloath him; if cold, it cannot warm him; if sick, it cannot recover him; if wounded, it cannot heal him; if weak, it cannot strengthen him; if fallen, it cannot raise him; if wandering, it cannot reduce him; O how much lesse able is it then to satisfie him! He that out of love to silver seeketh after silver, shall love still to seek it, but shall never

Some read the words thus, He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, and he that loveth it in the multitude of it, shall not have fruit.

be ſatisfied with it. A man ſhall as ſoon ſatisfie the grave, and ſatisfie hell, and ſatisfie the ſtomack with wind, as he ſhall be able to ſatisfie his ſoul with any earthly portion. All earthly portions are diſ-ſatisfying portions, they do but vex and fret, gaul and grieve, tear and torment the ſouls of men. The world is a cirtle, and the heart of man is a triangle, and no triangle can fill a circle: Some good or other will be always wanting to that man that hath onely outward good to live upon. *Abſalons* beauty could not ſatisfie him, nor *Hamans* honour could not ſatisfie him, nor *Ahabs* Kingdome could not ſatisfie him, nor *Balaams* gold could not ſatisfie him, nor *Ahitophels* policy could not ſatisfie him, nor the Scribes and Phariſees learning could not ſatisfie them, nor *Dives* riches could not ſatisfie him, nor *Alexanders* conqueſts could not ſatisfie him; for when (as he thought) he had conquered one world, he ſits down and wiſhes for

If the whole world were changed into a globe of gold, it could not fill one heart, it could not ſatisfie one immortal ſoul.

for another world to conquer; and *Cyrus* the Perſian King was wont to ſay, Did men but know the cares which he ſuſtained under his Imperial Crown, he thought no man would ſtoop to take it up. *Gilimex*, King of the *Vandals*, when he was led in triumph by *Belliſarius*, cried out, *Vanity of vanity, all is vanity*. *Charles* the fifth, Emperour of *Germany* (whom of all men the world judged moſt happy) cried out with deteſtation to all his Honours, Riches, Pleaſures, Trophies, *Abite hinc, abite longe*, Get you hence, let me hear no more of you: And it hath been long ſince ſaid of our King *Henry* the ſecond,

He whom, alive, the world could ſcarce ſuffice,
When dead in eight foot earth contented lies.

By all theſe Inſtances, 'tis moſt evident, that no earthly portions can ſatisfie the ſouls of men: Can

a man fill up his chest with air? or can he fill up the huge Ocean with a drop of water? or can a few drops of beer quench the thirst of a man in a burning feaver? or can the smell of meat, or the reaking fume of a Ladle, or dreaming of a banquet satisfie an hungry stomack? No: no more can any earthly portions fill or satisfie the heart of man. If emptinesse can fill the soul, if vanity can satisfie the soul, or if vexation can give content to the soul, then may earthly portions satisfie the soul, but not till then; when a man can gather grapes of thornes, and figs of thistles, and turn day into night, and winter into summer, then shall he find satisfaction in the creatures, but not before: All earthly portions are weighed in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and they are found to be lighter than the dust of the ballance; and this will rather inflame the thirst, than quench it.

A man that hath onely the world for his portion is like to *Noahs* Dove out of the Ark that was in continual motion, but could find no reſting place; but a man that hath God for his portion is like the Dove returning and reſting in the Ark; the ſoul can never be at reſt, till it comes to reſt and center in God: God himſelf is the ſouls only home; no good but the chiefeſt good can ſuffice an immortal ſoul. Look, as God never reſted till he had made man, ſo man can never reſt till he comes to enjoy God; the ſoul of man is of a very vaſt capacity, and nothing can fill it to the brim, but he that is fulneſſe it ſelf: 'tis the breaſt, and not the Baby nor the Rattle that will ſatisfie the hungry child; and 'tis God, and not this or that creature that can ſatisfie the ſoul of man. But

Fourteenthly, As God is a ſoul-ſatisfying portion, ſo God is a permanent portion, an indeficient por- 14.

portion, a never failing portion, a lasting, yea, an everlasting portion, *Psal.* 73. 26. *My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength* (or *the rock*) *of my heart, and my portion for ever.* God is a Fountain which the hottest Summer dries not, a bottomlesse treasure that can never be expended: God ever was, and ever will be; he cannot borrow his being from any thing who gives being and well-being to all things. *God is* Alpha *and* Omega, *the first and the last, he is yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever.* God is the Almighty, which is, and which was, and which is to come. All the differences of time are united by some to con-note the eternity of God, in that *Exod.* 3. 14. *And God said unto* Moses, *I am that I am: and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of* Israel, *I am hath sent me unto you:* Some translate this Text, according to the full scope of the Future amongst the Hebrews, *I am that I am, that I was, and that I will be*; for the Future amongst

Rev. 1. 8.

Omnia tempora conjuncti de Deo dicta æternitatem connotant.

amongſt the Hebrews, points at all differences of time, paſt, preſent, and to come; but others obſerving the ſtrict and proper ſignification of the Future, tranſlate it thus, *I will be that I will be*. This Name of God imports two of Gods incommunicable Attributes;

Firſt, His Eternity, when he ſaith, *I will be*.

Secondly, His Immutability, when he ſaith, *That I will be*. The Rabbins upon this Text expreſſe themſelves after this manner, *The bleſſed God ſaid unto* Moſes, *ſay unto them, I that have been, and I the ſame now, and I the ſame for time to come, &c.* but others more agreeable to the *Chaldee Paraphraſe* expreſs themſelves thus, *I, he that is, and was, and hereafter will be, hath ſent me unto you*. But 'tis obſervable, that the Angel of the waters unites all differences

Vidè Ainſw. and *D. Rim.* on the place. The Hebrew words in this *Exod.* 3. and their ſeveral ſignifications do well agree with the name *Jehovah*, which implieth, that God here ſending *Moſes*, is eternal in his being, faithful in his promiſes, and Almighty in the performance thereof.

ferences of time in that great and glorious acknowledgment, *Rev.* 16. 5. *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and waſt; and ſhalt be, becauſe thou haſt judged thus.* God is a God of that infinite excellency and glory, that 'tis utterly impoſſible for him to be better, or other than he is. If God ſhould in the leaſt be alterable or mutable; he would preſently ceaſe to be God. God is a God of that tranſcendent excellency, that there can be nothing added to him, nor nothing ſubſtracted from him: If you adde any thing to him, you deny him to be God; and if you take any thing from him, you deſtroy his being; *Jam.* 1. 17. *Pſal.* 90. 2. *From everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God:* And Mary *hath choſen the better part; which ſhall never be taken from her:* God is eternal, as neither being capable of a beginning nor ending; and therefore the *Egyptians* uſed to ſignifie God by a circle: and the *Perſians* thought that they honoured God moſt, when going up to the

the top of the highest Tower, they called him the circle of heaven; now you know a circle hath no end: And it was a custome among the *Turks* to go up every morning to a high Tower, and to cry out, *God alwayes was, and alwayes will be*, and so salute their *Mahomet*. Some things have a beginning, but no ending, as Angels, and the souls of men; and some things have no beginning, and yet have an end; as the Decrees of God in their final accomplishment; and some things have both a beginning and an ending, as all sublunary things; but God hath neither beginning nor ending: All creatures have a lasting, Angels have an outlasting, but God hath an everlasting being, 1 *Tim.* 1. 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the onely wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever, Amen.* God is without beginning and end, first and last, past and to come, *Psal.* 102. 25, 26, 27. *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens*

He that made heaven and earth must needs be before them, and therefore eternal; but this God did, *ergo*.

vens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt indure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. Were there no other Scripture to prove the eternity and immutability of God, this were enough. Whatever changes may pass upon the heavens and the earth, yet God will alwayes remain unchangeable and unalterable. By what hath been said, 'tis most evident that God is an everlasting portion, that he is a never failing portion.

But now all earthly portions are very uncertain; now they are, and anon they are not, *Prov.* 23. 5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings, they flie away as an Eagle towards heaven.* Though the foolish world call riches substance, yet they have no solid subsistance: All earthly portions are as transitory

tory as a shadow, a ship, a bubble, a bird, a dream, an arrow, a post that passeth swiftly away. Riches were never true to any that have trusted in them. In this Text Riches are said not to be, because they do not continue to be; they will not abide by a man, they will not long continue with a man, and therefore they are as if they were not. All earthly things are vain and transitory, they are rather shewes and shadows than real things themselves; 1 Cor. 7. 31. *For the fashion of this world passeth away*: The Greek word σχῆμα signifies a Mathematical Figure, which is a meer notion, and nothing in substance. All the glory of this world is rather a matter of fashion than of substance, 'tis a body without a soul, 'tis a golden shell without a kernel, 'tis a shew without a substance; there is no firmnesse, there is no solid-

Crassus was so rich that he maintained an Army with his own Revenues; yet he, his great army, with his son and heir fell together, and so his great Estate fell to others.

neſſe, there is no conſiſtency, there is no conſtancy in any of the creatures. All the pomp, and ſtate, and glory of the world is but a meer piece of Pageantry, a Maſk, a Comedy, a Fantaſie; *Act.* 25. 23. *And on the morrow when* Agrippa *was come and* Bernice *with great pomp.* The original words μετα πολλης φαντασιας ſignifie *great fantaſie*, or *vain ſhew*. The greateſt glory and pomp of this world in the eye of God, in the account of God, is but as a fantaſie or a ſhadow. It was a cuſtome in *Rome*, that when the Emperour went by upon ſome great day in all his Imperial pomp, there was an Officer appointed to burn flax before him, and to cry out, *Sic tranſit gloria mundi*, ſo the glory of this world paſſeth away: And this was purpoſely done to put him in mind, that all his honour, pomp, glory, and grandure ſhould ſoon paſſe and vaniſh away, as the flax did that he ſaw burnt before his eyes.

That

That great Conquerour of the world, *Alexander*, caused a Sword in the compasse of a Wheel to be painted upon a Table, to shew, that what he had gotten by the sword was subject to be turned about by the wheel of Fortune: and many great Conquerours, besides him, have found it so, and many now alive have seen it so.

Plutarch in the life of Alexander, &c.

Look, as the Rainbow shews it self in all its dainty colours, and then vanisheth away; so doth all worldly honours, riches, and preferments shew themselves, and then vanish away: and how many in our dayes have found it so? When one was a commending the riches and wealth of Merchants; I do not love that wealth, said an Heathen which hangs upon ropes, for if they break, the Ship and all their wealth miscarries. Certainly within these few moneths the miscarrying of several Ships hath caused several Merchants sadly to miscarry. A storm at Sea, a spark of fire, an

unfaithful servant, a false oath, or a treacherous friend, may quickly bring a man to sit with *Job* upon a dunghil. Look, as the bird flies from tree to tree, and as the beggar goes from door to door, and as the pilgrim travails from place to place, and as the Physician walks from Patient to Patient; so all the riches, honours, and glory of this world do either flie from man to man, or else walk from man to man. Who knows not, that many times one is made honourable by anothers disgrace? another is made full by another mans emptinesse? and a third is made rich by anothers poverty? how soon is the Courtiers glory eclipsed, if his Prince doth but frown upon him? and how soon doth the Prince become a peasant, if God doth but frown upon him? Now one is exalted, and anon he is debased; now one is full, and anon he is hungry; now one is cloathed gloriously, and anon he is cloathed with rags; now one is at

at liberty, and anon he is under reſtraint; now a man hath many friends, and anon he hath never a friend. There is nothing but vanity and uncertainty in all earthly portions. But

Fifteenthly, and laſtly, As God is a permanent and never failing portion, ſo God is an incomparable portion; and this follows clearly and roundly upon what hath been ſaid. For, 15.

1. If God be a preſent portion, a portion in hand, a portion in poſſeſſion; and

2. If God be an immenſe portion, if he be the vaſteſt, the largeſt, and the greateſt portion; and

3. If God be an all-ſufficient portion; and

4. If God be the moſt abſolute needful and neceſſary portion; and

5. If God be a pure and unmixed portion; and

6. If God be a glorious a happy, and a bleſſed portion; and

7. If God be a peculiar portion; and

8. If God be an univerſal portion; and

9. If God be a ſafe portion, a ſecure portion, a portion that none can rob or wrong us of; and

10. If God be a ſuitable portion; and

11. If God be an incomprehenſible portion; and

12. If God be an inexhauſtible portion, a portion that can never be ſpent, that can never be exhauſted or drawn dry; and

13. If God be a ſoul-ſatisfying portion; and

14. If God be a permanent and an everlaſting portion; then it muſt very neceſſarily follow, that God is an incomparable portion: but ſuch a portion God is, as I have proved at large; and therefore beyond all diſpute, God muſt needs be an incomparable portion. *Prov.* 3. 13, 14, 15. *Happy is the man that findeth wiſdome* (that is, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt) *and the*

man

man that getteth underſtanding, for the merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of ſilver, & the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canſt deſire are not to be compared to her. All the Gold of *Ophir*, and all the ſilver of the *Indies* (which are but the guts and garbidge of the earth) are nothing, yea leſs than nothing, compared with God. God is a portion more precious than all thoſe things which are eſteemed moſt precious. A man may deſire, what not? he may deſire that all the mountains in the world may be turned into mountains of gold for his uſe, he may deſire that all the rocks in the world may be turned into the richeſt pearls for his uſe, he may deſire that all the treaſure that is buried in the Sea may be brought into his Treaſuries, he may deſire that all the Crowns and Scepters of all the Princes and Emperours of the world may be pil'd up at his gate (as they were once ſaid to

he at *Alexanders*) yet all these things are not comparable to a Saints portion, yea, they are not to be named in that day, wherein the excellency of a Saints portion is set forth. *Horace* writes of a precious stone that was more worth than twenty thousand shekels; and *Pliny* valued the two precious pearls of *Cleopatra* at twelve hundred thousand shekels; but what were these? and what are all other precious stones in the world but dung and drosse in comparison of a Saints portion. I have read a story of a man, whom *Chrysostom* did feign to be in prison: Oh, saith he, if I had but liberty, I would desire no more, he had it; Oh then, if I had but for necessity, I would desire no more, he had it; Oh then, had I for a little variety, I would desire no more, he had it: O then, had I any office, were it the meanest, I would desire no more, he had it; Oh then, had I but a Magistracy, though over one Town only, I would desire no more.

Horatius.

Plinius.

Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.

more, he had it; Oh then, were I a Prince, I would deſire no more, he had it; Oh then, were I but a King, I would deſire no more, he had it; Oh then, were I but an Emperour, I would deſire no more, he had it; O then, were I but Emperor of the whole world, I would then deſire no more, he had it; and yet then he ſits down with *Alexander*, and weeps, that there are no more worlds for him to poſſeſſe. Now did any man enjoy what he is ſaid to deſire, it would be but a very mean portion compared with God: we may truly ſay of all the honours, riches, greatneſſe, grandure and glory of this world, compared with God, as *Gideon* ſometimes ſaid of the Vintage of *Abiezer*, The gleanings of *Ephraim* are better than the Vintage of *Abiezer*; ſo the very gleanings, yea, the ſmalleſt gatherings of God are far better, and more excellent, and tranſcendent, they are more ſatisfying, more delighting, more raviſhing, more quieting, Judg. 8. 2.

quieting, and more contenting than all earthly portions are, or can be: What comparison is there between a drop of a bucket, and the vast Ocean? between a weak drop, which recollecting all its force, yet hath not strength enough to fall, and the mighty waters? or what comparison is there between the dust of the ballance and the whole Earth? why, you will say, there is no comparison between these things; and I will say, there is lesse between all finite portions, and such an infinite portion as God is: For this is most certain, that there must needs be alwayes an infinite distance between what is finite, and what is infinite; and such a portion God is. By all that hath been said, 'tis most evident that God is an incomparable portion.

But now all earthly portions are comparable portions; you may easily and safely compare one earthly portion with another, one Prin-

Princes Revenues may be comparable to anothers, and one great mans Lordships may be comparable to anothers, and one Merchants estate may be comparable to anothers, and one Gentlemans lands may be comparable to anothers, and one wives portion may be comparable to anothers, and one childs portion may be comparable to anothers, &c. but God is an incomparable portion; there is no comparison to be made between God and other portions. And thus I have in these fifteen particulars fully discovered the excellency of the Saints portion above all other portions.

And therefore I shall now come to the second thing, and that is to shew you upon what grounds their title unto God as their portion is founded and bottomed, and they are these that follow:

First, The free favour and love of God, the good will and pleasure 1.

Deut. 7. 6, 7, 8. Ezek. 16. 1. to the 15.

sure of God is the true ground and bottome of Gods bestowing of himself as a portion upon his people; there was no lovelinesse nor comlinesse in them that should move him to bestow himself upon them; they had neither portion, nor proportion, and therefore there was no cause in them why God should bestow himself as a portion upon them. God, for the glory of his own free grace and love, hath bestowed himself as a portion upon those who have deserved to have their portion amongst Devils and damned spirits, in those torments that are endless, easeless, and remedilesse. The *Ethnicks* feign, that their Gods and Goddesses loved some certain Trees, for some lovely good that was in them; for *Jupiter* loved the Oak for durance, and *Neptune* the Cedar for stature, and *Apollo* the Laurel for greennesse, and *Venus* the Poplar for whitenesse, and *Pallas* the Vine for fruitfulnesse; but what should move the God of Gods

Gods to love us, who were so unworthy, so filthy, so empty, so beggarly, that were Trees indeed, but such as *Jude* mentions, *corrupt, fruitlesse, twice dead, and pluck't up by the roots?* The question may be resolved in three words, *Amat quia amat*, he loves us, because he loves us: the root of all divine love to us lieth onely in the bosome of God. But Vers. 12.

Secondly, Their title to God as their portion, is founded upon Gods free and voluntary donation of himself to them in the Covenant of grace. In the Covenant of grace God hath freely bestowed himself upon his people, *Jer.* 32. 38,40. *And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* The Covenant of grace is the great Chapter, 'tis the *Magna Charta* of all a Saints spiritual priviledges and immunities: 2. Ezek. 11.19 Heb. 8. 10, to the end, &c.

ties: now in this great Charter the Lord hath proclaimed himself to be his peoples God: *Jer.* 10. 16. *The portion of Jacob is the former of all things, the Lord of Hosts is his Name.* He that is the former of all things, even the Lord of Hosts, is the portion of *Jacob*, and he is *Jacobs* portion, by vertue of that Covenant of grace, which is a free, a full, a rich, and an everlasting Covenant, a Covenant that he will never break, not alter, not falsifie, a Covenant that he hath sworn to make good, as you may see by comparing the Scriptures in the Margin together. That Covenant of grace, whereby God gives himself to be his peoples God and portion, he is bound to make good by his oath; and therefore certainly whoever is forsworn, God will never be forsworn. The Egyptians (though Heathens) so hated perjury, that if any man did but swear *By the life of the King*, and did not perform his oath, that man was to die, and no gold

Psal. 89. 34
Isa. 54. 9, 10.
Psal. 111. 5.
Psal. 89. 35.
Psal. 105. 9
Mic. 7. ult.
Heb. 6. 13. to the 19.
Luke 1. 73.

was

was to redeem his life, as *Paulus Fagius* observeth in his Comment on *Genesis*. To think that God will not make good that Covenant that he hath bound himself by Oath to make good, is blasphemy, yea, it is to debase him below the very Heathens. All Lawes, both divine and humane, have left no such bond of assurance to tie and fasten one to another, as that of an Oath or Covenant; which as they are to be taken in sincerity, so they are to be kept inviolably. Certainly, the Covenant and Oath of the great God is not like a Gypsies knot that is fast or loose at pleasure: Whoever breaks with him, yet he will be sure faithfully and inviolably to keep his Covenant and his Oath with his. But

Thirdly, Their title to God, as their God and portion, is founded and bottomed upon that Marriage-union that is between God and his people; *Hosea* 2. 19,20,23. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever,* Jer. 3. 13,14

ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſſe, and in judgment, and in loving kindneſſe, and in mercies. I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulneſſe, and thou ſhalt know the Lord: And I will ſow her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; And I will ſay to them that are not my people, Thou art my people; and they ſhall ſay, Thou art my God. This threefold repetition, *I will betroth thee, I will betroth thee, I will betroth thee,* notes three things.

Firſt, The certainty of their Marriage-union and communion with God.

Secondly, The excellency and dignity of their Marriage-union and communion with God. And

Thirdly, The difficulty of believing their Marriage-union and communion with God. There is nothing that Satan doth ſo much envy and oppoſe, as he doth the ſouls Marriage-union and communion with God; and therefore God fetches it over again, and again, and again, *I will betroth thee*

unto thee, &c. And so in that, *Isa.* 61. 10. *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath cloathed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousnesse, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth her self with her jewels.* And so, *Chap.* 62. 5. *For as a young man marrieth a Virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as a bridegroom rejoyceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoyce over thee.* I have read of five sisters, of the same birth, pedigree, and race, whereof one was married to a Knight, another to an Earl, a third to a Gentleman, a fourth to a mean man, and the fifth to a filthy beggar; though they were all alike by birth and descent, yet their difference did lie in their marriage; we are all alike by creation, by the fall, by nature, and by the first birth, 'tis onely our Marriage-

What was said by one of the *Rabbins* concerning *Methuselahs* wife, that she had nine husbands in one, is very applicable to the believer that hath God for his husband.

union and communion with God that differences us from others, and that exalts and lifts us up above others. Look, as the husband is the wives by marriage-union and communion, so God is the believers God and portion, by vertue of that marriage-union and communion that is between God and the believer. And let thus much suffice for the second thing.

I shall come now to the third thing, and that is, to make some improvement of this blessed and glorious truth to our selves; and therefore,

Is it so, that God is the Saints portion, and that he is such an excellent, and such a transcendent portion above all other portions, as hath been fully evidenced? Then,

1. First, Let not the Saints that have God for their portion fret and vex themselves, because of those earthly portions that God commonly bestowes upon the worst

worst of men. There is a great aptnesse in the best of men to envy those earthly portions that God often bestows upon the worst of men. The lights of the Sanctuary have burnt dim, stars of no small magnitude have twinkled, men of eminent parts, famous in their generations for religion and piety, have staggered in their judgments, to see the flourishing estate of the wicked; it made *Job* to complain, *Job* 21. 7---16. and *Chap.* 24. 12. and *Jeremy* to expostulate with God, *Chap.* 12. 1, 2. and *David* even to faint and sink, *Ps.* 73. To see the prosperity of the ungodly, to see the wicked in wealth, and the Saints in want; the wicked in their robes, and the Saints in their rags; the wicked ho-

Diogenes the Cynick Philosopher seeing *Harpalus* a vitious person still thriving in the world, he was bold to say, that wicked *Harpalus* his living long in prosperity, was an argument, that God hath cast off his care of the world, that he cared not which end went forward; and no wonder if this Heathen stumbled at the prosperity of the wicked, when so many of the precious sons of *Zion* have stumbled at that stumbling stone.

noured, and the Saints despised; the wicked exalted, & the Saints debased, the wicked upon thrones, and Saints upon dunghils, is a sight that hath sadly put the best of men sometimes to it: But this is a temper of spirit that doth no wayes become those that have God for their portion: and therefore the Psalmist in the 37 *Psalme* cautions the Saints against it no lesse than three several times, as you may see in *v.* 1. 7, 8. There is nothing that doth so ill become a Saint that hath God for his portion, as to be sick of the *Frets*; and to prevent this mischief, this sickness, the precept is doubled, and redoubled, *Fret not, Fret not, Fret not.* Though they that have sore eyes are offended at bright clear lights, yet they that have God for their portion should never fret or fume, storm or rage, because some are greater than they, or richer than they, or higher than they, or more honourable than they, because all all their prosperity is nothing but an

an unhappy happinesse, 'tis nothing but a banquet (like *Hamans*) before execution; and what man is there (that is in his wits) that would envy a Malefactor who meets with honourable entertainment, as he is going along to execution? All a wicked mans delicate meats, his fine bits, and his murthering morsels are sawced, and all his pleasant and delightful drinks are spiced with the wrath and displeasure of an angry God; and why then should you fret and vex at their prosperity? what madnesse and folly would it be in a man that is heir to many thousands *per annum*, to envy a Stageplayer that is cloathed in the habit of a King, but yet not heir to one foot of land, no, nor worth one penny in all the world, and who at night must put off his royal apparel, and the next day put on his beggarly habit? Oh Sirs, it will be but a little little while before the great God will disrobe the wicked of all their pro-

ſperity, felicity, and worldly glory, and cloath them with the rags of ſhame, ſcorn, and contempt for ever; and therefore, Oh what folly and madneſs would it be for thoſe that are heirs of God, and joynt heirs with Chriſt of all the glory of heaven to envy the proſperity of the wicked.

Rom. 8.17.

The proſperity of the wicked layes them open to the worſt and greateſt ſins.

1. Firſt, It layes them open to all uncleanneſſe and filthineſſe, *Jer.* 5.7,8.

2. Secondly, It layes them open to pride and contempt of God, *Pſal.* 73. 3--13. *Deut.* 32. 15.

3. Thirdly, It layes them open to vex, oppreſs, tyrannize, perſecute, inſult, and triumph over the poor people of God, as you may ſee in *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Ahab*, *Jezabel*, *Haman*, and the Scribes and Phariſees.

4. Fourthly, It layes them open to a neglect and ſlighting of the wayes of God, and of the Ordi-

nances

nances of God, *Job* 21.5--16. *Mal.* 3.13,14,15. *Jer.*22.21. When the Proteſtants in *France* were in their proſperity, they ſlighted powerfull Preaching, &c. and began to affect a vain frothy way of preaching and living, which uſhered in the maſſacre upon them. *Moulin* hit it, when ſpeaking of the *French* Proteſtants, he ſaid, when the Papiſts hurt us and perſecute us for reading the Scriptures, we burn with zeal to be reading of them; but now perſecution is over, our Bibles are like old Almanacks.

Fifthly, It layes them open to a ſtupidneſſe, unmindfulneſſe, and forgetfulneſſe of the afflictions of the People of God, *Amos* 6.1--8. *Pharaohs* chief Butler was no ſooner ſet down in the ſeat of proſperity, but quite contrary to his promiſe, he eaſily forgets *Joſeph* in miſery. 5.

Sixthly, It layeth them open to dreadful apoſtaſie from the wayes and worſhip of God, *Deut.* 32.15, 6.

16, 17, 18. No sooner was *Israel* possest of the good land that flowed with milk and honey, &c. but they forsook the true worship of God, and fell to the worshipping of Idols, for which at last the good land spewed them out as a generation curst and abhorred by God.

7. Seventhly, It layes them open to all carnal security; as you may see in the old world, their prosperity cast them into a bed of security, and their security ushered in a flood of sin, and that flood of sin ushered in a flood of wrath, *Matt.* 24. 37, 38, 39.

8. Eighthly, It layes them open to Idolatry, which is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying sin, *Hosea* 2. 6, 7, 8. and *chap* 4. 6, 7, *&c.* Ah Sirs! who can seriously consider of the dreadful sins that the prosperity of the wicked layes them open to, and yet fret and vex at their prosperity?

Again, As their prosperity layes them open to the greatest sins, so their

their proſperity layes them open to the greateſt temptations, witneſſe their tempting of themſelves, and their own luſts, and witneſſe their temptings of others to the worſt of wickedneſſes and villanies, and witneſs their frequent tempting & provoking of the great God to his own face, and witneſſe their daily, yea, their hourly tempting of Satan to tempt their own ſouls. Oh Sirs, as there is no condition that layes perſons open to ſuch great tranſgreſſions as proſperity doth, ſo there is no condition that layes perſons open to ſuch horrid temptations as proſperity doth; and why then ſhould Gods holy ones envy wicked mens proſperity and worldly glory?&c.

Again, their proſperity, and worldly felicity and glory, is all the portion, and all the heaven and happineſs that ever they are like to have, *Pſal.*17.14. *From men of the world, which have their portion in this life.* Certainly, men whoſe hearts

hearts are worldly, whose minds are worldly, whose spirits are worldly, whose desires are worldly, whose hopes are worldly, and whose main ends are worldly, have onely the world for their portion; and what a pitiful perishing portion is that? men that chuse the world as their portion, and that delight in the world as their portion, and that trust to the world as their portion, and that in straits run to the world as their portion, and that take content and satisfaction in the world as their portion; doubtlesse these have never known what 'tis to have God for their portion. That's a very heart-cutting and soul-killing word that you have in that *Matth. 6.2. Verily, I say unto you, that they have their reward.* The Scribes and Pharisees proposed to themselves the eyes of men, the praise of men, and the applause of men for a reward of their almes, &c. and Christ tells them, that they have their reward; not Gods reward, but

but theirs; that is, that reward that they had propounded to themſelves, as the prime and ultimate end of their actions; and doubtleſſe that word was a thunderbolt to *Dives*, *Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedſt thy good things, and likewiſe Lazarus his evil*, &c. *Wicked men have their beſt here, their worſt is to come*; they have their comforts here, their torments are to come; they have their joys here, their ſorrows are to come; they have their heaven here, their hell is to come. *Gregory* being advanced to great preferment, profeſſed, that there was no Scripture that ſtruck ſo much terrour and trembling into his heart, as that Scripture did, *Here you have your reward*: Had wicked men but their eyes in their heads, and a little underſtanding in their hearts, and life in their conſciences, they would quickly conclude, that 'tis hell on this ſide hell for a man to have his portion in this world; and why then ſhould you envy the pro-

Luke 16.25

proſperity of the wicked.

Deut. 28. Levit. 26. Prov. 3. 33. Mal. 2. 2.

Again, All their proſperity is curſt unto them, as you may ſee by comparing the Scriptures in the Margine together; all their comforts are curſt without doors, and all their comforts are curſt within doors; there are ſnares on all their tables, and poiſon in all their cups, and the plague in all their brave clothes, &c. *Dionyſius* the tyrant, to ſhew *Dimocles* (one of his flatterers) the felicity (or rather the infelicity) of a King attired him as a King, and ſet him at the Table, ſerved as a King, and whilſt he was in his imperial robes he cauſed a naked ſword with the point downward to be hung juſt over his head by a horſe-hair, which made *Dimocles* to tremble, and to forbear both meat and mirth: Though the Feaſt was a royal Feaſt, and the Attendance royal Attendance, and the Muſick royal Muſick, yet *Dimocles* for his life could not taſte of any of thoſe varieties that were before him, nor take

Vide Cic. Tuſc. queſt.

take any comfort or contentment in any other part of his royal entertainment, becauſe of the ſword, the ſword that hung but by a ſingle hair over his head. Oh Sirs, a ſword, a ſharp ſword, a two-edged ſword, a ſword of diſpleaſure, a ſword of wrath, a ſword of vengeance hangs over the heads of every wicked perſon, when he is in his moſt proſperous and flouriſhing condition; and had ſinners but eyes to ſee this ſword, it would be as the hand-writing upon the wall, it would cauſe their thoughts to be troubled, and their countenances to be changed, and their joynts to be looſed, and their knees to be daſhed one againſt another; and why then ſhould Chriſtians fret and vex at the proſperity of the wicked?

Again, When wicked men are at the higheſt, then are they neereſt their fall, as you may ſee in that 37 *Pſal.* and that 73 *Pſal.* and in thoſe great inſtances of *Pharaoh*, *A-*

Exod. 14. Judg. 1.6,7 1 Kings 20 and ch. 22. 2 Kings 19 Esth. 6.4. Dan. 5.

Adoni-bezeck, *Ben-hadad*, *Ahab*, *Sennacherib*, *Haman*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, and *Herod*, *&c.* Look, as the Ship is sooneſt caſt away, when ſhe is top and top-gallant, ſo when wicked men are top and top-gallant, when they are at the heighth of all their pomp, bravery, and worldly glory, then God uſually tumbles them down into the very gulph of miſery; the great ones of the world have ſuddenly fallen from their higheſt honours and dignities, and have been ſorely and ſadly exerciſed with the greateſt ſcornes and calamities: let me give you this in a few remarkable inſtances.

Valerian the Roman Emperour fell from being an Emperour to be a foot-ſtool to *Sapor* the King of *Perſia*, as often as he took horſe.

Valens the Emperour (a furious Arrian) being wounded in a Fight with the *Gothes*, in his flight he betook himſelf to a poor cottage, wherein

wherein he was burnt by the *Gothes*.

Aurelianus the Roman Emperour brought *Tetricus* his oppoſite, and the noble Queen *Zenobia* of *Palmerina* in triumph to *Rome* in golden chains.

Bajazet a proud Emperour of the Turks, being taken priſoner by *Tamberlain*, a *Tartarian* Emperour, he bound him in chains of gold, and uſed him for a foot-ſtool when he took horſe; and when he eat meat, he made him gather crums under his table, and eat them for his food.

Caſar having bathed his ſword in the blood of the Senate, and his own Countrey-men, is after a while miſerably murdered in the Senate by his own friends *Caſſius* and *Brutus*, to ſhew, that they are but the ſcourges and rods of the Almighty, which he will caſt into the fire, as ſoon as he hath done with them.

The victorious Emperour *Henry* the fourth, who in 62 pitch't battels,

tels, for the moſt part, became victorious, fell to that poverty and miſery before he died, that he was forced to petition to be a Prebend in the Church of *Spire* to maintain him in his old age, which the Biſhop of that place denied him, whereupon he brake forth into that ſpeech of *Job*, *Have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath touched me:* He died of grief and want.

And *Procopius* reports of King *Guillimer*, who was ſometimes a potent King of the *Vandals*, that he was brought ſo low as to intreat his friend to ſende him a Sponge, a Loaf of Bread, and an Harp; a Sponge to dry up his tears, a Loaf of Bread to maintain his life, and an Harp to ſolace himſelf in his miſery.

Dionyſius, King of *Sicily*, was ſuch a cruel tyrant, that his people baniſhed him; after his baniſhment he went to *Corinth*, where he lived a baſe and contemptible life; at laſt he became a School-maſter, that

that ſo when he could no longer tyrannize over men, he might over boyes.

Great *Pompey* that uſed to boaſt that he could raiſe all *Italy* in arms with a ſtamp of his foot, had not ſo much as room to be buried in.

And *William* the Conquerours Corps lay three dayes unburied, his interment being hindered by one that claimed the ground to be his.

And *Pythias* pined to death for want of bread, who once was able to entertain and maintain *Xerxes* mighty army. *Turk. Hiſt. fol.220,&c.*

And *Philip de Comines* reports of a Duke of *Exeter*, who though he had married *Edward* the fourth's ſiſter, yet he ſaw him in the Low-Countreys begging bare-foot.

And ſo *Beliſarius*, a moſt famous General, and the onely man living in his time for glorious victories, riches and renown, yet in his old age he had his eyes put out by the Empreſs *Theodora*; and being led

at laſt in a ſtring he was forced to cry out, *Date panem Belliſario, &c.* Give a cruſt to old blind *Belliſarius*, whom vertue advanced, but envy hath brought into this great miſery. By all theſe royal inſtances you ſee the truth of that which once a Royal Slave hinted to *Seſoſtris*; the Story runs thus:

Seſoſtris having taken many of his Neighbour-Kings priſoners, he made them to draw his Chariot by turnes; now it ſo happened, that one of theſe royal ſlaves, as he was drawing in the Chariot, had his eye almoſt continually fixt on the wheels, which *Seſoſtris* obſerving, ask't him, why he looked ſo ſeriouſly upon the wheels? he anſwered, that the falling of that ſpoke loweſt which was even now higheſt put him in mind of the inſtability of fortune; *Seſoſtris* duly weighing the parable, would never after be drawn by his Royal Slaves any more.

By what hath been ſaid, 'tis moſt evident that when wicked men

men are higheſt, they are neereſt their fall; and that none fall ſo certainly and ſo ſuddenly, and under ſuch dreadful calamities and miſeries as thoſe that have been moſt highly advanced in all worldly dignities and glories; and why then ſhould any fret or vex at their outward proſperity, or worldly felicity?

Again, God will bring them to an account for all thoſe talents of power, of honour, of riches, of truſt, of time, of intereſt that God hath given them in the world; and the more they have imployed the liberality and bounty of God againſt God, or his glory, or intereſt, or people; the ſhorter ſhall be their felicity, and the more endleſſe ſhall be their miſery. The greateſt account and the greateſt damnation commonly attends the great ones of the world. I have read of *Philip* the third of *Spain*, whoſe life was free from groſs evils, profeſſing that he would ra- Matth. 25. 14--31.

ther lose all his Kingdomes, than offend God willingly; yet being in the agony of death, and considering more thorowly of that account he was to give to God, fear struck into him, and these words break from him, Oh would to God I had never reigned, Oh that those years I have spent in my Kingdome, I had lived a private life in the wilderness; Oh that I had lived a solitary life with God; how much more confidently should I have gone to the Throne of God? what doth all my glory profit me now, but that I have so much the more torment in my death, and the greater account to give up to God. I have read of a Souldier, who being to die for taking a bunch of grapes contrary to his Generals command; as he was going along to execution he went eating of his grapes, whereupon one of his fellow-souldiers rebuked him, saying, what are you eating your grapes now you are going to execution? the poor

fellow

fellow replied, Prethee friend do not envy me my grapes, for I shall pay a dear price for them, I shall lose my life for them; and so accordingly he did: So I say, Oh you that have God for your portion, do not envy, do not fret and vex at the prosperity of the wicked; for what though they have more than heart can wish, what though they live in pleasure, and wallow in all carnal and sensual delights, &c. yet they have a sad account to give up to God, and they shall pay dear at last for all their worldly enjoyments; for without sound repentance on their sides, and pardoning grace on Gods, they shall not only lose their lives, but they shall also for ever lose their immortal souls; and therefore never fret at their prosperity.

Oh Sirs, do not you remember that *Lazarus* did not fret nor fume because *Dives* had robes for his rags, and delicates for his scraps? &c. for he very well knew, that

though he was *sine domo*, yet not *sine domino*; he had a guard of glorious Angels to transport his holy, precious heaven-born soul into *Abrahams* bosome; he knew that it was better to beg on earth, than to beg in hell: Oh Sirs, what is darknesse to light, earth to heaven, chaffe to wheat, tin to silver, drosse to gold, or pibbles to pearls? no more are all earthly portions to that God who is the Saints portion: and therefore let not the Saints that have such a matchlesse portion envy the prosperity and felicity of wicked men. 'Tis the justice of envy to kill and torment the envious; and therefore shun it as you would poison in your meat, or a serpent in the way. A man were better have a serpent tumbling up and down in his bowels, than to have envy a gnawing in his soul. Envy is as pernicious a wickednesse, as 'tis a foolish and a groundlesse wickednesse; envy is a scourge to scourge the soul, 'tis a serpent to sting the soul, 'tis a poyson

poison to swell the soul, 'tis a Sawe to sawe the soul, 'tis a moth that corrupts the soul, and 'tis a canker that eats up the soul; and therefore fly from it, as you would fly from the most cruel and destroying adversary. Oh Sirs, to be angry, because God is bountiful to others; to frown, because God smiles upon others; to be bitter, because God is sweet in his dealings with others; and to sigh, because God multiplies favours and blessings upon others; what is this but to turn others good into our own hurt, others glory and mercy into our own punishment and torment? and if this be not to create a hell in our own hearts I am much mistaken. I shall conclude this first Inference with the counsel of the Prophet in that 49. *Psal.* 16, 17. *v. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased: For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him.* When the bodies of the wicked are rotting in

their graves, and their souls are roaring in hell, none of their worldly greatnesse, pomp, state, glory, gallantry, riches, rents or revenues shall descend after them to administer one drop of comfort to them; and therefore never envy their outward prosperity or worldly glory, &c. But

2. Secondly, If the Saints have such an excellent, such a transcendent, and such a matchlesse portion; Oh then let them be content with their present condition, let them sit down satisfied and contented, though they have but a handful of meal in their Barrel, and a little oil in a Cruse. Oh Sirs, in having of God you have much, in having of God you have enough, in having of God you have all; and why then should you not sit down quiet with your present allowance? Certainly, if much will not satisfie you, if enough will not satisfie you, if all will not satisfie you, nothing will satisfie

1 Kings 17. 12.

ſatisfie you, *Heb.* 13.5. *Let your converſation be without covetouſneſſe* (or *love of ſilver*, as the Greek word ſignifies) *and be content with ſuch things as you have*, (or as the Greek hath it, ἀρκούμενοι τοῖς παροῦσιν, *be content with preſent things*) *for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.* There are five negatives in the Greek, *I will not, not, not, not, not leave thee, nor forſake thee*; fully to aſſure, and fully to ſatisfie the people of God that he will never forſake them, and that he will everlaſtingly ſtick cloſe to them: What doth this unparallel'd gemination, *I will never, never, never, never, never*, import but this, *I will ever, ever, ever, yea and for ever and ever take care of thee, and look after thee, and be mindful of thee.* Though they had changed their glory for contempt, their fine raiment for ſheep-skins and goat-skins, their ſilver for braſſe, their plenty for ſcarcity, their fulneſſe for emptineſſe, their ſtately houſes for holes and caves, and dens of the earth, yet Heb.11.36, 37,38.

yet they are to be contented and satisfied with present things, upon this very ground, that God will alwayes cleave to them, and that he will never turn his back upon them. The Hebrews had been stript and plundered of all their goods that were good for any thing, and yet they must be contented, they must sit down satisfied with their hands upon their mouths, though all were gone. Though men cannot bring their means to their minds, yet they must bring their minds to their means, and then they will sit down in silence, though they have but a rag on their backs, a penny in their purse, and a cruft in their Cupboords, &c. O Sirs, a little will serve nature, lesse will serve grace, though nothing will serve mens lusts; and why then should not Christians be contented with a little. Oh friends, you have but a short journey to go, you have but a little way home, and a little will serve to bear your charges till

Heb. 10. 34

Nature is content with a little, as not to starve, not to thirst, saith *Galen.*

you come to heaven, and therefore be contented with a little; to have more than will serve to bring a man to his journeys end is but a burthen; one staff is helpful to a man in his journey, but a bundle is hurtful; and this doubtlesse *Jacob* well understood, when he made that proposal in *Gen.* 28. 20, 21. *If God will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God.* *Jacob* doth not say, if God will give me delicates and junkets to eat, he shall be my God, O no; but if he will give me but bread to eat, though it be never so course, and never so black, and never so dry, he shall be my God: he doth not say, If God will give me so many hundreds or so many thousands a year, he shall be my God, O no; but if he will give me bread to eat, he shall be my God; nor he doth not say, If God will give me so many hundred pounds in my purse, a comfortable habitation, and a thriving trade, he shall be my God, O no; but

but if he will give me bread to eat, he shall be my God; nor he doth not say, If God will give me costly apparel, or rich and royal raiment to put on, he shall be my God, O no; but if God will give me raiment to put on, though it be never so mean and poor, he shall be my God. If *Jacob* may but have a little bread to feed him, and a few cloaths to cover him, 'tis as much as he looks for. Look, as a wicked man in the fulnesse of his sufficiency is in straits, as *Job* speaks; so a holy man in the fulnesse of his straits enjoys an all-sufficiency in God, as you may see in *Jacob*. O Christians, though you have but little, yet you have the highest and the noblest title that can be to that little that you do enjoy, for you hold all *in capite*, as the Apostle sheweth in that large Charter of a Christian, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. which the wicked do not. Now an hundred a year upon a good title is a better estate than a thousand a year upon a crack't, crazy title;

Job. 20. 22

title; Saints have the beſt title under heaven for all they enjoy, be it little or be it much; but all the titles that ſinners have to their earthly enjoyments are but crazy titles, yea in compariſon of the Saints titles they are no titles.

Again, That little that a Saint hath, he hath it from the ſpecial love and favour of God, he hath it from a reconciled God. Now a little from ſpecial love is better than a great deal from a general providence; a penny from a reconciled God is better than a pound from a bountiful God; a ſhilling from God as a father is a better eſtate than an hundred from God as a Creator. The kiſſe that a King gave to one in the ſtory, was a greater gift than the golden cup that he gave to another; a little with the kiſſes of Gods mouth is better than all the gold of *Ophir*; a drop of mercy from ſpecial love is better than a Sea of mercy from common bounty.

Prov. 15.17

Can. 1. 2.

Look,

Look, as one draught of clear sweet Spring-water is more pleasing, satisfying, and delightful to the pallat, than a Sea of brakish Salt-water: So one draught out of the fountain of special grace is more pleasing, satisfying, and delightful to a gracious soul, than a whole Sea of mercy from a spring of common grace: and therefore do not wonder when you see a Christian sit down contented with a little.

Again, That little that a Christian hath shall be certainly blest and sanctified to him: Though thy mercies, O Christian, are never so few, and never so mean, yet they shall assuredly be blest unto thee; the Lord hath not only promised that he will blesse thy blessings to thee, but he hath also sworne by himself, that in blessing he will blesse thee; and how dar'st thou then, O Christian, to think that the great and faithful God will be guilty of a lye, or that which is worse, of perjury. Now

1 Tim. 4. 3, 4, 5. 1 Tit. 15. Jer. 32. 41, &c.

Gen. 22. 16 17.

a little blest is better than a great deal curst; a little blest is better than a world enjoyed; a pound blest is better than a thousand curst; a black crust blest is better than a feast curst; the gleanings blest are better than the whole Harvest curst; a drop of mercy blest, is better than a Sea of mercy curst; *Lazarus* crums blest, was better than *Dives* his delicates curst; *Jacobs* little blest unto him, was better than *Esaus* great estate that was curst unto him; 'Tis alwayes better to have scraps with a blessing, than to have Manna and Quails with a curse; a thin Table with a blessing is alwayes better than a full Table with a snare; a thread-bare coat with a blessing is better than a purple Robe curst; a Hole, a Cave, a Den, a Barne, a Chimney-corner with a blessing, is better than stately Palaces with a curse; a woollen cap blest is better than a golden Crown curst; and it may be that Emperour understood as much, that said of his Crown

Prov. 3. 33. Mal. 2, 2, 3.

Luke 16.

Psal. 78. 18--32.

Crown when he look't on it with tears, If you knew the cares that are under this Crown you would never ſtoop to take it up. And therefore why ſhould not a Chriſtian be contented with a little, ſeeing his little ſhall be bleſt unto him? *Iſaac* tils the ground, and ſowes his ſeed, and God bleſſes him with an hundred fold; and *Cain* tils the ground, and ſowes his ſeed, but the earth is curſed to him, and commanded not to yield to him his ſtrength. Oh therefore never let a Chriſtian murmur becauſe he hath but a little, but rather let him be ſtill a bleſſing of that God that hath bleſt his little, and that doth bleſſe his little, and that will bleſſe his little to him.

Gen. 26. 12

Ch. 4. 12.

Again, that little eſtate that a righteous man hath is moſt commonly a more laſting, a more abiding, a more permanent, and a more induring eſtate than the great and large eſtates of the wicked are, *Pſal.* 37. 16. *A little that a*

Prov. 15. 16 & ch. 16. 8.

righteous

righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked. One old piece of Gold is worth more than a thouſand new Counters, and one box of pearls is more worth than many loads of pibbles, and one hundred pounds a year for ever is better than many hundreds in hand. 'Tis very obſervable, the Pſalmiſt doth not ſimply ſay, the eſtate, but the rich eſtate; the riches not of one, or a few, but of many wicked, are not comparable to that little that a righteous man hath: the Hebrew word המון *Hamon*, that is here rendred *riches*, ſignifies alſo a multitude or an abundance, or ſtore of riches; a little that a righteous man hath is better than the multitude of riches, or the abundance of riches, or the ſtore of riches that many wicked men have; and he gives you the reaſon of this in the 17 *v.* *For the armes of the wicked ſhall be broken, but he upholdeth* (or *under-props*) *the righteous.* By the armes of the wicked you are to underſtand their

From this word *Hamon* comes the word *Mammon*, Luk. 16. 9.

ſtrength, their valour, their power, their wit, their wealth, their abundance, which is all the arms they have to ſupport and bare up themſelves in the world with; Now theſe armes ſhall be broken and when they are broken, then, even then, will God uphold the righteous, that is, God will be a continuall overflowing fountain of good to his righteous ones, ſo that they ſhall never want, though all the ſprings of the wicked are dried up round about them.

Oh Sirs, there are ſo many mothes, and ſo many dangers, and ſo many croſſes, and ſo many loſſes, and ſo many curſes that daily attends the great eſtates of wicked men, that they are very rarely long-liv'd · ah! how many in this great City are there that have built their neſts on high, and that have thought that they had laid up riches for many years, and that have ſaid in their hearts, that their lands, and ſtocks, and trades,

and

and houſes, and pompous eſtates ſhould abide for ever; who are now broken in pieces like a potters veſſel? ah! how often doth the pride, the oppreſſion, the lying, the cheating, the over-reaching, the ſwearing, the curſing, the whoring, the covetouſneſſe, the drunkenneſſe, and the wantonneſſe of the wicked cut the throat of all their mercies? theſe are the wickednesſes that as a fire burnes up all their outward enjoyments, and that turnes their earthly paradiſe into a real hell; 'tis the wickedneſſe of the wicked that cauſeth their proſperity to wither, and that provokes God to turn their plenty into ſcarcity, their glory into contempt, and their honour into ſhame; 'tis very obſervable that in the holy Scriptures the proſperous eſtates of the wicked are frequently compared to things of an abrupt exiſtence, to a ſhadow which ſoon paſſeth away; to chaff, which a puff, a blaſt of wind eaſily diſperſeth and ſcatter-

Job 14.2. Ch. 21.17,18 Iſa 29.5.

2 Kings 19 26. Job 24.24. Ch.15.33. & ch.20.8.

tereth; to grasse, which quickly withereth before the Sun; to tops of corn, which in an instant are cut off; to the unripe grape, which on a sudden drops down; yea, to a dream in the night, and what's a dream, but a quick fancy and a momentary vanity? All the riches that the wicked gain, either by their trades, or by their friends, or by their great places, or by their high Offices, or by their subtil contrivances, or by their sinful compliances; and all the honour they gain in the Court, or in the Camp, or in the School, is but light and inconstant, 'tis but like the crackling of thorns under a pot; they are fading vanities, that commonly die before those that enjoy them are laid in the dust.

Oh therefore let all Christians be contented with their little, seeing that their little shall outlast the large estates of wicked and ungodly men: A man that hath God for his portion can truly say that which no wicked man in the world

world can ſay, *viz. Surely goodneſſe and mercy ſhall follow me all the dayes of my life, and I will dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever.* The Pſalmiſt doth not ſay, that goodneſſe and mercy ſhould follow him a day, or a few dayes, or many dayes, but that *goodneſſe and mercy ſhould follow him all the dayes of his life*: the Hebrew word *Radaph*, that is here rendered *to follow*, ſignifies *to perſecute*; ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *goodneſſe and mercy ſhall follow me, as the perſecutor follows him he perſecutes*, that is, it ſhall follow me frequently, it ſhall follow me conſtantly, it ſhall follow me ſwiftly, it ſhall follow me earneſtly, it ſhall follow me unweariedly; the word ſignifies a ſtudious, anxious, careful, diligent following: 'tis a Metaphor that is taken from beaſts & birds of prey, that follow and flie after their prey with the greateſt eagerneſſe, cloſeneſſe, and unweariedneſſe imaginable; Why thus ſhould mercy and loving kindneſſe follow *David* all the dayes of his life; and if in Pſal. 23.6.

a temptation he ſhould prove ſo weak, and ſo fooliſh, as to run from goodneſſe and mercy, yet goodneſſe and mercy ſhould follow him, like as the Sun going down followeth the paſſenger that goeth Eaſtward with his warm beams.

Pſal. 37. 35, 36, 37.

Oh but now the mercies of the wicked are ſhort-liv'd; though the wicked flouriſh and ſpread themſelves like a green bay-tree one day, yet they are cut down the next, and there is neither root nor branch to be found, tale nor tidings to be heard of them, for in a moment they with all their greatneſſe, ſtate, pomp, and glory, are utterly vaniſhed and baniſhed out of the world. And ſo, *Pſal.* 34. 10. *The young lions do lack, and ſuffer hunger, but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* Young lions are luſtie, ſtrong, fierce, and active to ſeek their prey, and have it they will if it be to be had; and yet for all that they ſhall lack and ſuffer hunger.

By

By young lions the learned understand,

First, All wicked Rulers, men that are in the highest places and Authority, as the Lion is the King of beasts. Prov.28.15 Ezek.32.2.

Secondly, By Lions they understand all cruel oppressours that are still oppressing and grinding of the faces of the poor, *Prov.* 30. 30. *rich cormorants* (as the Septuagint renders it) *who live on the spoil of the poor, and are never satisfied.*

Thirdly, By Lions they understand the Tyrants and the mighty *Nimrods* of the world, which are sometimes called Lions, *Jer.* 2.15. 1 *Chron.* 11.22. *Nahum* 2.13.

And lastly, By Lions they understand all the crafty and subtil Politicians of the earth, *Ezek.* 38, 13. *The Lion lurks very craftily and secretly for his prey.* The summe of all is this, *That wicked men that are in the highest authority, and that great Oppressors, cruel Tyrants, and crafty Politicians shall be impoverished, and brought to penury, beggery, and misery.*

And this we have often seen verified before our eyes.

Oh Christian! what though thou hast but a little of this world, yet the God of all mercies, and all the mercies of God, the God of all comforts, and all the comforts of God are thine; and what wouldest thou have more? In God is fulnesse, all fulnesse, infinite fulnesse; and if this, with a little of the world, will not satisfie thee, I know not what will: If a God for thy portion will not content thee, all the world will never content thee: Shall *Diogenes* (a Heathen) be more content with his Tub to shelter him, and with his dish to drink in, than *Alexander* was with all his conquests; and shall not a Christian sit down contented and satisfied in the enjoyment of God for his portion, though he hath but a Tub to shelter him, Bread to feed him, and a dish of water to refresh him. I shall conclude this Head with a weigh-

weighty saying of *Cato's*, *Si quid est quo utar utor, si non scio quis sum, mihi vitio vertunt, quia multis egeo, & ego illis, quia nequeunt egere.* I have neither house, nor plate, nor garments of price in my hands; what I have I can use, if not, I can want it: some blame me, because I want many things, and I blame them, because they cannot want. Oh let not nature do more than grace; Oh let not this Heathen put Christians to a blush! But *Aulus Gellius.*

Thirdly, If God be the Saints portion, the sinners are much mistaken that judge the Saints to be the most unhappy men in the world; there are no men under heaven in such a blessed and happy estate as the Saints are, *Balaam* himself being Judge, *Num.* 23. 5---11. A man that hath God for his portion is honourable even in rags, he hath some beams, some rayes of the majesty and glory of God, stampt upon his soul, and shining upon his face, and glittering 3. *Psal.* 8. 4, 5. *Psal.* 16. 3.

ing in his life; and he that is so blind as not to behold this, is worse than *Balaam* the witch. Though the blind Jews could see no form nor comlinesse nor beauty in Christ, that they should desire him, yet the wise men that came from the East could see his Divinity sparkling in the midst of the straw, they could see an heavenly majesty and glory upon him when he lay among the beasts, when he lay in a manger, witnesse their tedious journey to find him, and witnesse their worshipping of him, and witnes those rich and royal presents that they brought unto him: So though the blind sons of the world can see no lovelinesse, nor comlinesse, no beauty nor glory in the Saints, or upon the Saints, that should render them amiable and desireable in their eyes, yet God, and Christ, and Angels, and those that are wise in heart, and wise to salvation, can see a great deal of divine beauty, majesty, and glory upon all

Isa. 53. 2.

Luke 2. 7.
Matth. 2. 11

all thoſe that have God for their portion. There is no happineſſe to that of having God for a mans portion, *Pſal.* 144. 15. *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe,* (but give me that word again) *yea, happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord.* He that hath not God for his portion can never be happy, and he that enjoys God for his portion can never be miſerable. *Auguſtine* ſpeaking of one, who paſſing by a ſtately houſe which had fair lands about it, and asking another whom he met, to whom that houſe and land belonged? he anſwered, to ſuch an one; Oh, ſayes he, that's a happy man indeed: No, ſayes the other, not ſo happy as you think, for it is no ſuch happineſſe to have that houſe and land; but he is happy indeed that hath the Lord for his God, for that is a priviledge that exceeds all things whatſoever; for (ſaith he) he that hath honours and riches may go to hell for all them, but he that hath God to be his God, is ſure to be

be everlaſtingly happy. According as a mans portion is, ſo is he; now if God be a mans portion, who is the ſpring, the fountain, the top of all excellency and glory, then certainly that man muſt needs be an excellent man that hath God for his portion: and upon this ſcore 'tis that the righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour: let the righteous mans neighbour be never ſo great, and never ſo rich, and never ſo mighty, and never ſo noble, yet if he hath not God for his portion, the righteous man is more excellent than he; and the reaſon is evident, becauſe he hath that God for his portion that is moſt eminent and excellent. Oh Sirs, if God be moſt excellent, if God be alone excellent, then they muſt needs be moſt excellent that have God for their portion. 'Tis very obſervable, that according to the excellency of God the ex-

Prov. 12. 26. A man that hath God for his portion doth as much excell and out-ſhine ſuch as have only *Mammon* for their portion, as the Sun excells and out-ſhines the Stars.

excellency of the Saints is in ſome proportion hinted at in Scripture; as in that, *Deut.* 33. 26,29. *There is none like unto the God of Jeſurun*: and preſently it follows, *Happy art thou, O Iſrael, who is like unto thee?* or, Oh the happineſſes of thee, Oh *Iſrael*, Oh the multiplied happineſſe, the heaped up happineſſe that attends *Iſrael*: the Saints that have God for their portion are the worlds Paragons; they are worthies of whom this world is not worthy; they are ſuch great, ſuch noble, ſuch worthy worthies, that this world is not worthy to think on them, to look on them, to wait on them, or to enjoy their company; one Saint that hath God for his portion, is more worth than all the millions of ſinners in the world that have not God for their portion. God delights to reflect his glory upon his Saints; for as there are none like to God, ſo there are none like to the people of God: Look, as God is a none-ſuch, ſo his people

Heb. 11.

people are a none-ſuch; and ſo in that, 2 *Sam.* 7.22, 23. *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beſides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears: and what one nation in the earth is like thy people?* Look, as the excellency of God riſes, ſo in a proportion the excellency of the Saints riſes; and look, as there are no gods in all the world that are ſo excellent as God is, ſo there are no people in all the world that are ſo excellent as the people of God are. Every one that hath God for his portion reſembles the child of a King, as *Zeba* & *Zalmunna* ſaid to *Gideon* of his brethren. If you look upon their divine and heavenly original, you ſhall find that they are born of the blood-royal, and that they are his ſons who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; yea, all the Saints that have God for their portion are Kings, *Rev.* 1.6. *And hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father*: They have the power, ſoveraignty,

Judg. 8.18.

Rev. 17.14. Rev. 5.10. Dan. 7.27. 1 Cor. 3.22, 23.

veraignty, and authority of Kings, they are priviledged as Kings, they are guarded as Kings, they are adorned as Kings, they are entertained as Kings, they feed as Kings, they feed high, they live upon God and Christ, and all the glory of heaven, and they are cloathed as Kings, they are cloathed with Christs righteousnesse, and with the garments of joy and gladnes; Kings have great alliance, and so have the Saints that have God for their portion; Kings have a very great influence, and so have they that have God for their portion; A man in rags that hath God for his portion, is a more honourable person than the greatest Monarch on earth that hath only the world for his portion. I have read of *Alexander* the great, and of *Pompey* the great, and of *Charles* the great, and of *Abner* the great, and of *Herod* the great, but what were all these great men, but Grass-hoppers to the Saints that have God for their portion? Men that have had

Psal. 34. 14. Heb. 1. ult. Psal. 45. 13. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

As you may ſee in the 10. and 11. Chap. of the Hebrews.

had God for their portion, have been very famous, illuſtrious, and glorious, when they have been friendleſſe, and houſe-leſſe, and pennileſs; yea, when they have been under the Swords, and Sawes, and Harrowes of perſecution. When *Maximian* the tyrant had pluckt out one of *Paphnutius* the Confeſſors eyes, that good Emperour *Conſtantine* ſaw ſuch a luſtre, beauty, and glory upon *Paphnutius* that he fell upon him, and kiſt him, and he kiſt that very hole moſt, wherein one of the Confeſſors eyes had been, as being moſt raviſhed and delighted with that hole. His name that hath God for his portion ſhall live, when the name of the wicked ſhall rot; his name ſhall be written in golden characters upon Marble, when the name of the wicked ſhall be written in the duſt.

Prov. 10. 7. Pſal. 112. 9.

The blind beſotted world are ſadly out, who are ready to ſet the Crown of Honour and Happineſs upon any heads, rather than upon theirs

theirs that have God for their portion. Look, as *Samuel* beholding the beauty and ſtature of *Eliab*, would needs have him anointed, and the Crown ſet upon his head, when the Crown was deſigned for *David* at the Sheep-fold; ſo vain men are very apt to ſet the Crown of happineſſe upon their heads; who have the greateſt ſhare in this world, when as the Crown of happineſſe and bleſſedneſſe is onely to be ſet on their heads that have God for their portion. What the Queen of *Sheba* ſaid of *Solomons* ſervants, *Happy are thy men, happy are theſe thy ſervants which ſtand continually before thee, and that hear thy wiſdome*, is here very applicable to the Saints; *Happy, happy, yea thrice happy are thoſe precious ſons and daughters of* Zion *that have God for their portion.* A man that hath God for his portion ſhall live happily, and die happily, and after death he ſhall remain happy to all eternity, and therefore we may well cry out, *Oh the happineſſe and bleſſed-*

1 Sam. 16. 6 --12.

1 Kings 10. 8.

neſſe of that man that hath God for his portion]. But

4. Fourthly, If the Saints have ſuch an excellent, ſuch a matchleſs portion, O then let them never ſet their hearts and affections upon any earthly portions: 'Tis true, Prov. 23. 5. O Chriſtian, thou mayeſt lay thy hand upon an earthly portion, but thou muſt never ſet thy heart upon an earthly portion, *Pſal.* 62. 10. *If Riches increaſe, ſet not thy heart upon them.* The Hebrews put the *heart* for *the thoughts, affections, love, deſire, joy, hope, confidence, &c. If riches increaſe, O ſet not thy thoughts upon them; If riches increaſe, O ſet not thy affections upon them; If riches increaſe, O ſet not thy love upon them, ſet not thy deſires upon them, ſet not thy joy and delight upon them,* nor *never place thy hope or confidence in them.* O what a ſhame and diſhonour would it be to ſee men of great eſtates to rake in dunghils, and to ſweep Chanels, and to carry Tankards of water, and to cry Trifles

Trifles up and down the ſtreets! and is it not a greater ſhame, a greater diſhonour; to ſee thoſe that have the great God for their portion, to ſet their hearts and affections upon a little white and yellow clay? 'Twas a generous ſpeech of that Heathen, *Themiſtocles*, who ſeeing ſomething glifter like a pearl in the dark, ſcorned to ſtoop for it himſelf, but bid another ſtoop, ſaying, Stoop thou, for thou art not *Themiſtocles*. O 'tis below a generous Chriſtian, a gracious Chriſtian, a noble Chriſtian, that hath God for his portion, to ſtoop to the things of this world: a true bred Chriſtian will ſet his feet upon thoſe very things that the men of the world ſet their hearts; *Rev.* 12.1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman cloathed with the Sun, and the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a Crown of twelve ſtars.* The Church is compared to a woman, for her weakneſſe, for her lovingneſſe, for her comlineſſe, and for her fruit-

fulneſs; and being cloathed with the Sun of righteouſneſs, ſhe hath the Moon, that is, the World, under her feet; the Church treads under her feet all temporary and tranſitory things, which are as changeable as the Moon; ſhe treads upon all worldly and carnal enjoyments and contentments as things below her, as things not worthy of her: What vanity is it for a great man to ſet his heart on birds-neſts and paper-kites that boyes make fly in the air? and as great, yea a greater vanity 'tis for the Saints that have God for their portion, to ſet their hearts upon the poor little low things of this world. 'Tis not for you to be a fiſhing for Gudgeons, but for Towns, Forts, and Caſtles, ſaid *Cleopater* to *Mark Anthony*; ſo ſay I, 'tis not for you that have God for your portion to be a fiſhing for the Honours, Riches, and Preferments of the world; but for more grace, more holineſs, more communion with God, more power againſt

againſt corruptions, more ſtrength to withſtand temptations, more abilities to bear afflictions, more ſenſe of divine love, and more aſſurance of intereſt in Chriſt, and in all that glory and happineſs that comes by Chriſt. When *Alexander* heard of the riches of *India*, he regarded not the Kingdome of *Macedonia*, but gave away his gold; and when he was ask't what he kept for himſelf? he anſwered, *Spem majorum & meliorum*, the hope of better and greater things. O Sirs, when you look upon thoſe riches of grace, thoſe riches of glory, thoſe riches of juſtification, thoſe riches of ſanctification, and thoſe riches of conſolation that are in that God that is your portion; how ſhould you diſ-regard, how ſhould you deſpiſe, how ſhould you ſcorn the great things, and the gay things of the world? 'Twas a notable ſpeech of *Eraſmus*, if his wit were not too quick for his conſcience; I deſire (ſaid he) neither wealth nor honour,

no more than a feeble horſe doth an heavy cloak-bag. O Chriſtians, you have many thouſand excellencies in God to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in Chriſt to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in the Spirit to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in the Covenant to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in the Goſpel to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in the Ordinances to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in promiſes to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in prophecies to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in rare providences to ſet your affections upon, and you have many thouſand excellencies in the Saints to ſet your affections upon; and therefore, for ſhame,

ſet not your affections upon things below, ſet not your hearts upon things that periſh, *Coloſſ.* 3. 1. A man can never come to ſet his heart upon any earthly portion, but that God will either imbitter it, or leſſen it, or cloud it, or wholly ſtrip him of it; and therefore ſet looſe, I ſay again, ſet looſe in your affections to all worldly enjoyments. But

Fifthly, If the Saints have ſuch a glorious, ſuch an incomparable portion; then let them be chearful and comfortable under all worldly croſſes, loſſes, and troubles. With what a Roman ſpirit do many vain men of great Eſtates bear up under great loſſes and croſſes; and ſhall not grace do more than nature? ſhall not the Spirit of God do more than a Roman ſpirit? O Sirs, how can you look upon God as your portion, and not bear up bravely under any worldly loſſe? *Heb.* 10. 34. *For ye had compaſſion of me in my bonds,* 5. Acts 5. Rom. 5. 2, 3, 4.

bonds, and took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods, knowing in your ſelves that ye have in heaven a better, and an enduring ſubſtance. They had God for their portion, and the joy of the Lord was their ſtrength, and therefore they could rejoyce in whatever dammage came upon them by the hand of violence. And ſo *David* could comfort himſelf in his God, and incourage himſelf in his God, when *Ziklag* was burn't, his wives and children carried captive, and the people in a readineſs to ſtone him; now all was gone, he looks up to God as his portion, and ſo he bears up bravely and cheerfully in the midſt of all extremity of miſery. And ſo *Habakkuk* was a man of the ſame noble temper, as you may ſee in that *Hab.*3.17,18. *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſome, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive ſhall fail, & the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the*

1 Sam. 30.6

Better is that hell on earth which makes way for heaven, than that heaven on earth which makes way for hel.

the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation. Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſome, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord; I, but that's nothing to rejoyce in the Lord as long as there is fruit in the vines; I, but (ſaith he) *though there be no fruit in the vines, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord*: I, but that's nothing to rejoyce in the Lord ſo long as the labour of the olive doth not fail; I, but (ſaith he) *though the labour of the olive ſhall fail, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord*; I, but that's nothing to rejoyce in the Lord ſo long as the fields do yield their meat; I, but (ſaith he) *though the fields ſhall yield no meat, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord*: I, but that's nothing to rejoyce in the Lord ſo long as the flock is not cut off from the fold; I, but (ſaith he) *though the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord*: I, but that's nothing to rejoyce in the Lord ſo long as there be Herd in the ſtalls; I, but (ſaith he)

though

though there be no Herd in the ſtalls, yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of my ſalvation. *Habakkuk* could rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in that God that was his portion, not only when all delightful comforts and contentments ſhould fail, but alſo when all neceſſary comforts and contentments ſhould fail; *Habakkuk* was a man of a raiſed ſpirit, he knew that he had that God for his portion that did contain in himſelf all comforts and contentments, and that could eaſily make up the want of any comfort or contentment, and that would certainly lie himſelf in the room of every comfort and contentment, that either his children ſhould need or deſire; and in the power of this faith he rejoyces and triumphs in a day of thick darkneſſe and gloominеſs. 1 *Sam.* 1. 5, 18. *But unto* Hannah *he gave a worthy portion, for he loved* Hannah, *and her countenance was no more ſad.* O my brethren, it doth no wayes become thoſe that have God for their

their portion to walk up and down the world with clouded countenances, with ſaded countenances, or with dejected countenances, &c. and therefore under all your croſſes and loſſes wipe your eyes, and walk up and down with pleaſant countenances, with cheerful countenances, and with ſmiling countenances, and this will be an honour to God, and an honour to religion, and an honour to profeſſion, and an honour to that Saintſhip that is too much ſlighted and ſcorned in the world.

Indeed when wicked men are exerciſed with croſſes and loſſes, 'tis no wonder to ſee them take on like mad men, to ſee them take on bitterly like *Micah*, when he cried out, *They have taken away my gods, and what have I more? and what is this that ye ſay unto me, what aileth thee?* Judg. 18. 23, 24. Wicked mens bags and goods are their gods, they are their portion, they are their all, and when theſe are gone, all is gone

gone with them; when these are taken away, all is taken away with them; and therefore 'tis no wonder to hear them cry out, Undone, undone, and to see them sit down and weep, as if they were resolved to drown themselves in their own tears: But you that have God for your portion you have such a portion that shall never be taken from you. As Christ told *Mary, Thou hast chosen the better part that shall never be taken from thee*: and therefore it highly concernes you to bear up bravely, as well when you have but little, as when you have much; and as well when you have nothing, as when you have every thing: You shall be sure to enjoy all in God, and God in all; and what would you have more? *Seneca* once told a Courtier that had lost his son, that he had no cause to mourn, either for that or ought else, because *Cæsar* was his friend: O then, what little cause have the Saints to mourn for this or that losse, considering that

Luke 10. 42.

that God is their friend, yea, which is more, that God is their portion. I have read of a company of poor Chriſtians, who being baniſhed into ſome remote parts; and one ſtanding by, ſeeing them paſs along, ſaid, that it was a very ſad condition that thoſe poor people were in, to be thus hurried from the ſociety of men, and to be made companions with the beaſts of the field; true, ſaid another, it were a ſad condition indeed, if they were carried to a place where they ſhould not find their God; but let them be of good cheer, for God goes along with them, and will follow them with the comforts of his grace whereſoever they go. Would it not make a man either ſigh or laugh to ſee a man lament and take on bitterly for the loſs of his ſhooe-ſtrings, when his purſe is ſafe; or for the loſs of a little lumber, when all his goods are ſafe; or for the burning of a Pig-ſty, when his dwelling houſe is ſafe; or for the loſſe of

of his ſcabbard, when his life is ſafe? and why then ſhould a Chriſtian lament and take on for the loſſe of this or that, ſo long as his God is ſafe, and his portion is ſafe? But

6. Sixthly, If the Saints have ſuch an excellent, and ſuch a tranſcendent portion, as hath been diſcovered, then away with all ſinful ſhifts, wayes, courſes, and compliances to gain an earthly portion: was it not horrid, yea, helliſh baſeneſs in *Ahab*, who had a whole Kingdome at his devotion, to poſſeſs himſelf of poor *Nabothi* vineyard by falſe ſwearing, hypocriſie, treachery, cruelty, and blood? but certainly, it is a far greater baſeneſſe and wickedneſs in thoſe that have God for their portion (or at leaſt pretend to have God for their portion) to be a ſharking, and a ſhifting, and a complying with the luſts of men, and with the abominations of the times, and all to hold what they have,

1 Kings 21.

or

or elſe to raiſe themſelves, and greaten themſelves, and inrich themſelves by others ruine; theſe men might do well to make that, *Jer.*17.11. their daily companion; *As the Partridge ſitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not, ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his dayes, and at his end ſhall be a fool.* The crafty Fox in the Fable hugg'd himſelf to think how he had cozened the Crow of his Breakfaſt; but when he had eaten it, and found himſelf poiſoned with it, he wiſhed that he had never medled with it. O Sirs, there is a day a coming, wherein men ſhall wiſh that they had never laboured to ſin themſelves into honours, riches, preferments, high offices, and high places, when God ſhall let ſome ſcalding drops of his wrath to fall upon their ſpirits who have ſold all Chriſts and Chriſtians concernments and their own conſciences, to gain riches and high offices; how will they curſe the day wherein

wherein they were born, and be ready by the knife or the halter to put an end to their moſt wretched dayes? O what a ſad and lamentable thing would it be to ſee men worth many thouſands a year, a purloining from others, or a defrauding, cheating, or over-reaching of others? but 'tis a far more ſad and lamentable thing to ſee men who pretend to have God for their portion, to act all this, and more than this, and all to lay up an earthly portion for themſelves and others: How many be there in theſe dayes who pretend very high towards God, and yet *ſell the righteous for ſilver, and the poor for a pair of ſhooes, yea, that pollute the Name of God, the worſhip of God, and that ſlay the ſouls of men for handfuls of barley, and pieces of bread, and that will ſay any thing, or ſwear any thing, or bow, or crouch to any thing for a piece of ſilver and a morſel of bread, or to be put into one of the Prieſts Offices?* O Chriſtian, thou haſt all honours and riches, and prefetments in that

Amos 2.6.

Ezek.13.19

1Sam.2.ult.

God

God that is thy portion; and why then ſhouldeſt thou go about to ſin thy ſelf into the enjoyment of thoſe things which thou haſt already in thy God? Haſt thou forgot that *Solomon* got more hurt by his wealth, then ever he got good by his wiſdome? and that *David* was beſt in a wilderneſs, and that our ſtomacks are uſually worſt in Summer, and that the Moon is furtheſt from the Sun, when it is fulleſt of light, and that all that a man gets by breaking with God and his conſcience, he may put in his eye, and that the coal that the Eagle carried from her ſacrifice to her neſt ſet all on fire? have you forgotten what is ſaid of *Abraham* in that, *Gen.* 13. 2. viz. *That he was very rich in Cattle, in ſilver, and in gold?* The Hebrew word *Cabbedh*, that is here rendered *rich*, ſignifies *heavy*, to ſhew that riches are a very heavy burden, and oftentimes an hinderance in the way to heaven. O! how vain, how uncertain, how vexing, and how di-

viding are the great things of the world? how unfit do they make many men to live, and how unwilling do they make many men to die? O what is gold in the purse, when there is guilt upon the conscience? what are full bags, when sin and wrath are at the bottome of them? O Sirs, you have an infinite fulnesse in that God that is your portion, and that fills all in all; and why then should you break the hedge to gain the world? But

7. Seventhly, If the Saints have such an excellent, glorious, and incomparable portion, O then let them glory in their portion, let them rejoyce and delight themselves in their portion; man is a creature very apt and prone to glory in earthly portions, when he should be a glorying in the Lord;

1 Cor. 1 31.

Jer. 9. 23, 24. Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdome, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory

in

in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this; that he underſtandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord which exerciſe loving kindneſſe, judgement, and righteouſneſſe in the earth, for in theſe things I delight; ſaith the Lord; Iſa. 41. 16. *Thou ſhalt rejoyce in the Lord, and ſhalt glory in the holy one of Iſrael*; and Chap. 45. 25. *In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory*. Oh how ſhould the Saints that have God for their portion, make their boaſt of their God, and rejoyce in their God, and glory in their God! Shall the men of the world glory in an earthly portion, and ſhall not a Saint glory in his heavenly portion? Shall they glory in a portion that they have onely in hope, and ſhall not a Chriſtian glory in that portion that he hath already in hand? Shall they glory in a portion that they have only in reverſion, and ſhall not a Saint glory in that portion that he hath in preſent poſſeſſion? Shall they glory in their hundreds and thouſands

a year, and shall not a Christian glory in that God that fills heaven and earth with his glory? In all the Scriptures there is no one duty more presst, than this of rejoycing in God; and indeed if you consider God as a Saints portion, there is every thing in God that may incourage the soul to rejoyce in him; and there is nothing in God that may in the least discourage the soul from rejoycing and glorying in him. O Christians, the joy of the Lord is your strength, *Neh.* 8.10. 'tis your doing strength, and your bearing strength, and your suffering strength, and your prevailing strength; 'tis your strength to work for God, and 'tis your strength to wait on God, and 'tis your strength to exalt and lift up God, and 'tis your strength to walk with God, 'tis your strength to live, and your strength to die, and therefore be sure to keep up your joy in God. 'Tis one of the saddest sights in all the world to see a man

Compare these Scriptures together, Phil. 3.1. Ch. 4 4. Ezek. 10.7. Joel 2.23. Psal. 33.1. Psal. 79.12. Ps. 149.1,2.

man that hath God for his portion, with *Cain*, to walk up and down this world with a dejected countenance. 'Twas holy joy and cheerfulnesse that made the faces of several Martyrs to shine as if they had been the faces of Angels. One observes of *Christina*, that she was cheerful when she was apprehended, and joyful when she was led to the Judge, and merry when she was sent to prison, and so she was when bound, and when lift up in a Cage, and when examined, and when condemned. O Christians, how can you number up the several souls that you deject, the foul mouths that you open, and the bad reports that you bring upon the Lord and his wayes by your sad dejected and uncomfortable walking. It is very observable that the Lord takes it so very unkindly at his peoples hands, when they go sighing, lamenting, and mourning up and down, when as they should be a rejoycing and a delighting of themselves in him

Augustin. in Psal. 137.

and his goodnes, that he threatens to pursue them to the death with all manner of calamities and miseries upon that very score, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulnesse, and with gladnesse of heart, for the abundance of all things, therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakednesse, and in want of all things; and he shall put a yoke of Iron upon thy neck until he have destroyed thee.* But

8. Eighthly, If the Saints have such a great, such a large, and such an all-sufficient portion, as hath been shewed they have, then certainly they shall never want any thing that is good for them. *David* tells you that *his cup runs over*; the words are an allusion to the Hebrew Feasts; *Davids* table was richly and nobly spread, both in sight and spight of all his enemies. In one God is every good; and what can he want that enjoyes that

Psal. 23. 5, 6.

that God? God is a bundle of all goodnesse and sweetnesse. And look as God is the best God, so he is the greatest and the fullest good, he can as easily fill the most capacious souls up to the very brim with all inward and outward excellencies and mercies, as Christ did once fill those water-pots of *Gallilee* up to the very brim with wine. If God hath enough in himself for himself, then certainly he hath enough in himself for us; that water that can fill the Sea, can much more easily fill my cup or my pot. *My people shall be satisfied with goodnesse, saith the Lord: And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, yea I will rejoyce over them to do them good; and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul: My God shall supply all your need*; or, *my God shall* πληρώσει *fill up all your need*, as he did the widows vessels in that 2 *Kings* 4. 3, 4, 5, 6. Godlinesse hath the promise both

John 2.

Jer. 31. 14.

Ch. 32. 40, 41.

Phil. 4. 19.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Mal. 6. 25. 31, 32, 33.

both of this life and that which is to come; he that hath God for his portion shall have all other things cast into his store, as paper and packthread is cast into the bargain, or as an handful of corn is cast into the corn you buy, or as Hucksters cast in an over-cast among the fruit you buy, or as an inch of measure is given into an ell of cloth. O Sirs, how can that man be poor, how can that man want that hath the Lord of heaven and earth for his portion? Surely he cannot want light that enjoyes the Sun, nor he cannot want bread that hath all sorts of grain in his barnes, nor he cannot want water that hath the fountain at his door; no more can he want any thing that hath God for his portion, who is every thing, and who will be every thing to every gracious soul. O Sirs, the thought, the tongue, the desire, the wish, the conception all fall short of God, and of that great goodness that he hath laid up for them that

that fear him; and why then should they be afraid of wants? How doth that pretty bird the *Robin-red-breast* cheerfully sit and sing in the chamber-window, and yet knows not where he shall make the next meal, and at night must take up his lodging in a bush; O what a shame is it that men that have God for their portion should act below this little bird? I have read of famous Mr. *Dod* (who is doubtlesse now high in heaven) who intending to marry, was much troubled with fears and cares how he should live in that condition, his in-comes being so small, that they would but maintain him in a single condition; and looking out at a window, and seeing a Hen scraping for food for her numerous brood about her, thought thus with himself; this Hen did but live before it had these chickens, and now she lives with all her little ones; upon which he added this thought also, I see the fowls of the air neither sowe nor reap,

Psal. 31. 19.

Psa 104. 10 to Vers. 31.

Mat. 6. 25-32.

reap nor gather into barnes, and yet my heavenly Father feeds them; and thus he overcame his fears of wanting. O Chriſtians you have ſuch a Father for your portion, as will as ſoon ceaſe to be, as he will ceaſe to ſupply you with all things neceſſary for your good. 'Twas a good ſaying of one, I would deſire neither more nor leſs than enough; for I may as well die of a ſurfeit, as of hunger, and he is rich enough that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity that is not forced to ſerve. *Plutarchs* reaſoning is good (*Taton philon panta koina*) friends have all things in common, but God is our friend, *ergo* we cannot want; a rare ſpeech from an Heathen. Rather than *Iſrael* ſhould want, did not God feed them with Manna in the wilderneſſe? and rather than *Eliah* and the widow ſhould not have their wants ſupplied, did not God work a miracle, by cauſing the handful of meal in the barrel, and the little oil in the cruiſe

1 Kings 17. 15,16.
2 Kings 4. 5,6.

cruiſe to laſt and hold out, till he ſupplied them in another way; rather than *Eliah* ſhall want, God will feed him with a Raven, and by that miraculous operation ſave him from a periſhing condition. O Sirs, all the Attributes of God are ſo ingaged for you, that you cannot want, and all the promiſes of God are ſo ingaged to you, that you cannot want, and all the affections of God are ſo ſet upon you, that you cannot want; and why then ſhould you fear wants? O Sirs, hath God given you his Son, his Spirit, his grace, his glory, yea himſelf, and will he deny you leſſer things? hath he given you thoſe things that are more worth than ten thouſand worlds, and will he not give you bread to eat, and raiment to put on? hath he given you thoſe ſpiritual riches that infinitely exceed and excell all the riches, rubies, and pearls in the world,

Rom. 8. 32.

Gregory the great was wont to ſay, that he was the poor man, whoſe ſoul was void of grace, if not he whoſe Coffers were empty of money.

world, and will he deny you a little money in your purſes to beare your charges till you come to heaven? hath he given you a crown, and will he deny you a cruſt? hath he given you his royal robes, and will he deny you a few rags? hath he given you a royal Palace, and will he deny you a poor Cottage to ſhelter you from the ſtormy winter, and from the ſcorching ſummer? yea, doth he feed his enemies, and cloath his enemies, and protect his enemies, and provide for his enemies, which are the generation of his wrath and curſe, and will he not do as much for you, O ye of little faith? will he do ſo much for them that hate him, and will he not do as much for you that love him, doubtleſſe he will; will he feed the Ravens, and provide for the Oxe and the Aſſe, and cloath the graſſe of the field, and will he ſuffer you, who are his love, his joy, his delight, to ſtarve at his feet, for want of neceſſaries? Surely no.

But

But suppose you were under many real wants, yet certainly this very Consideration, that the Lord is your portion should quiet your hearts, and bear up your spirits bravely under them all. *Jerome* tells us of one *Dydimus*, a godly Preacher, who was blinde, *Alexander* a godly man coming to see him, asked him, whether he was not sorely troubled and afflicted for want of his sight: O yes, said *Dydimus*, it is a very great affliction and grief to me; whereupon *Alexander* chid him, saying, Hath God given you the excellency of an Angel, of an Apostle, and are you troubled for that which rats and mice, and bruit beasts enjoy? O Sirs, if God hath given you himself for a portion, then certainly 'tis a sinful thing, a shameful thing, an unworthy thing, for you to be troubled, afflicted, and grieved, because you want this and that worldly contentment and enjoyment, which God bestows upon such whose wickedness hath debased

Isa.1.2,3. debased them below the Oxe and the Asse, I mean, men of beastly spirits, and beastly principles, and beastly practises. Look, as *Benjamins* Gen.43.34 mess was five times greater than his brethrens; so those that have God for their portion have five thousand times a greater portion than the wicked of the world whose portion only lies in perishing trifles, and in tried vanities; and therefore there is no just reason, no Scripture-reason why they should be afraid of wants. But

9. Ninthly, If the Saints have such a great, such a large, such an all-sufficient, such an infinite, and such an incomparable portion, as hath been made evident they have, O then away with all inordinate cares for the things of this life; O say to all vexing, wasting, distracting, and disturbing cares, as *Ephraim* Hos.14.8. once said to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I any more to do with you?* Christs counsel should lie warm upon every mans heart that

that hath God for his portion, *Take no thought, ſaying, what ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink? or wherewithall ſhall we be clothed?* and ſo ſhould the Apoſtles, *Caſt all your care on him, for he careth for you*: and ſo ſhould the Pſalmiſts alſo, *Caſt thy burden* (or as the Greek well turns it *thy care*) *upon the Lord, and he ſhall ſuſtain thee, he ſhall never ſuffer the righteous to be moved.* Some write, that Lions ſleep with their eyes open and ſhining; but the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the keeper of *Iſrael* never ſlumbers nor ſleeps, his eyes are alwayes open upon the upright, he ſtill ſtands Centinel for his peoples good, and therefore why ſhould inordinate cares eat up the hearts of Chriſtians? O Chriſtians, of all burthens the burthen of carking cares will ſit the heavieſt upon your ſpirits; there is no burthen that will bow you and break you like this; inordinate cares vex the heart, they divide the heart, they ſcratch

Matth. 6. 31.

1 Pet. 5. 7.

Pſal. 55. 22.

1 Tim. 6. 10 scratch and tear the heart, they pierce and wound the heart through and through with many sorrows; inordinate cares will either crowd out Duties, as in *Martha*, or else they will crowd into Duties, and spoil Duties, as in that *Luke* 8. 14. *the cares of the world choak the Word.* Look, as *Pharaohs* ill-favoured lean kine eat up the fat, so all inordinate ill-favoured cares will eat up all those fat and noble cares for God, for his glory, for heaven, for holinesse, for grace, for glory, for power against corruptions, for strength to resist temptations and for support and comfort under afflictions, &c. with which the soul should be filled and delighted. Oh that you would for ever remember these few things to prevent all inordinate, distrustful, and distracting cares.

Luk. 10. 40

Gen. 41. 4.

1.

First, That they are a dishonour and a reproach to the all sufficiency of God, as if he were not able to supply all your wants, and to answer

anſwer all your deſires, and to ſuccour you in all your diſtreſſes, and to deliver you out of all your calamities and miſeries, &c.

Secondly, Inordinate cares are a diſhonour and a reproach to the omniſciency of God; as if your wants were not as well known to him as his own works, and as if he had not a fixed eye upon all the ſtraights and trials that lies upon you, and as if he did not know every burthen that makes you to groan, and did not behold every affliction that makes you to ſigh, and did not obſerve every tear that drops from your eyes, &c. whereas his eye is ſtill upon you, *Deut.* 11.11,12. *But the Land whither ye go to poſſeſſe it, is a land of hils and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven; a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are alwayes upon it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of the year.* And do you think that he will not have as

2.

Pſal. 139. Pſal. 40.5. Job [illegible]. 2 Chron. 16.9, &c.

great a care, and as tender a regard of you who are his jewels, his treasure, his joy, yea, who are the delight of his soul, and the price of his Sons blood?

3. Thirdly, Inordinate cares are a dishonour and a reproach to the authority of God; as if the earth were not the Lords, and the fulnesse thereof, and as if all creatures were not at his command and at his dispose, whenas he is the great proprietary, and all is his by primitive right, and all the creatures are at his service, and are ready at a word of command to serve where he pleaseth, and when he pleaseth, and as he pleaseth, and whom he pleaseth.

Psal. 24. 1. Psal. 50. 10.

4. Fourthly, Inordinate cares are a dishonour and a reproach to the mercy, bounty, and liberality of God: they proclaim God to be a hard Master, and not to be of so free, so noble, and so generous a spirit, as Scripture and the experi-

ences

ences of many thousands speaks him to be. I have read of a Duke of *Millain*, that marrying his daughter to a son of *England*, he made a Dinner of thirty Courses, and at every Course he gave so many gifts to every guest at the Table, as there were Dishes in the Course; Here was rich and royal entertainment, here was noble bounty indeed; but this bounty is not to be named in the day wherein the bounty and liberality of God to his people is spoken of. Princes treasures have been often exhausted and drawn dry, but the treasures of Gods bounty and liberality were never, nor never shall be exhausted or drawn dry. O Sirs, you are as well able to tell the Stars of heaven, and to number the sands of the Sea, as you are able to number up the mercies and favours of God that attends his people in one day, yea, that attends them in one hour of the day, or in one minute of an hour, such is his liberality and bounty towards

Mercy & bounty is as essential to God, as light is to the Sun, or as heat is to the fire,

towards them. God is alwayes best, when he is most in the exercise of his bounty and liberality towards his people; his favours and mercies seldome come single; there is a Series, a concatenation of them, and every former draws on a future; yea, such is the bounty and liberality of God, that he never takes away one mercy, but he hath another ready to lay in the room of it; as *Joshuah* began to shine before *Moses* his candle was put out; and before *Joshuah* went to bed, *Othniel* the son of *Kenaz* was risen up to judge; *Eli* was not gathered to his Fathers, before *Samuel* appeared hopeful; nor *Sarah* was not taken away till *Rebeckah* was ready to come in her stead. The Jews have a saying, that never doth there die any illustrious man, but there is another born as bright on the same day. But

5. Fifthly, Inordinate cares are a reproach and a dishonour to the fidelity of God, as if he were not the

the faithful witnesse, the faithful God, that hath bound himself by promise, by covenant, and by oath to take care of his people, and to provide for his people, and to look after the welfare of his people. God is that Ocean and Fountain from whence all that faithfulnesse that is in Angels and men do issue and flow, and his faithfulnesse is the rule and measure of all that faithfulnesse that is in all created beings, and his faithfulnesse is unchangeable and perfect: though the Angels fell from their faithfulnesse, and *Adam* fell from his, yet it is impossible that ever God should fall from his. Gods faithfulnesse is a foundation-faithfulnesse, it is that foundation, upon which all our faith, hope, prayers, praises, and obedience stands; and therefore whoever is unfaithful, God will be sure to shew himself a faithful God, in making good all that he hath spoken concerning them that fear him. I had rather, said *Plutarch*, that men should say,

Rev. 1.5. Ch. 3.14. Isa. 49.7. 1 Cor. 1.9. Ch. 10.13. 2 Thes. 3.3. Heb. 10.23. Rev. 19.11. Heb. 6.13-19.

there was never any ſuch perſon in the world as *Plutarch*, rather than ſay, that *Plutarch* is unfaithful; men were better ſay, that there is no God, than to ſay that God is an unfaithful God; and yet this is the conſtant language of inordinate cares. O Sirs, Gods goodneſſe inclines him to make good promiſes, precious promiſes, and his faithfulneſſe engages him to make thoſe promiſes good; if the word be once gone out of his mouth, heaven and earth ſhall ſooner paſſe away than one jot of that Word ſhall fail. Men ſay and unſay what they have ſaid, they often eat their words as ſoon as they have ſpoke them, but ſo will not God: This faithfulneſſe of God *Joſhua* ſtoutly aſſerts to the heighth; he throws down the Gantlet, and doth as it were challenge all *Iſrael* to ſhew but that one thing that God had failed them in of all the good things that he had promiſed. If God in very faithfulneſſe afflicts his people to make good

2 Pet. 1 4.

Mat. 5. 18.

Joſh. 23. 14,15.

good his threatnings, O how much more in faithfulneſſe will he preſerve and provide for his people, to make good his promiſes? God hath never broke his word, nor crack't his credit by deceiving, or by compounding for one penny leſs in the pound, than what he hath promiſed to make good; God ſtands upon nothing more than his faithfulneſſe, and glories in nothing more than his faithfulneſſe, and yet all inordinate cares leaves a blot upon his faithfulneſſe. But Pſa. 119. 75.

Sixthly and laſtly, Inordinate cares are a reproach to the pity and compaſſion of God; they ſpeak out God to be a God of no pity, of no bowels, of no tenderneſſe, whereas God is all pities, all bowels, all compaſſions, all tenderneſſes, *Pſal.* 103. 13. *Like as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him:* there is an Ocean of love and pity in a fathers heart to his children, and 6. Matth. 6. 32. Gen. 33. 13, 14.

there is much more in Gods to his: Hence he is called the Father, by way of eminency; and indeed originally and properly there is no Father to him, there is no Father like him, there is no Father beſides him; and he is called the Father of all mercies, becauſe all the mercies, all the pities, all the bowels, all the compaſſions that are in all the Fathers on earth are but a drop of his Ocean, a ſpark of his flame, a mite out of his Treaſury. That Father that ſees his childe in want, and pities him not, and pitying, if able, relieves him not, forfeits the very name of father, and may better write himſelf monſter than man. I have read of a young man, who being at Sea in a mighty Storm, was very merry, when all the paſſengers were at their wits end for fear, &c. and when he was asked the reaſon of his mirth, he anſwered, that the Pilot of the Ship was his father, and he knew that ſuch was his fathers pity and compaſſion,

Ephes. 3.15 God is *pater miſerationum, tam pius nemo, tam pater nemo*, ſaith *Bernard*.

paſſion that he would have a care of him: O Sirs, whatever ſtorms the people of God may be in, yet ſuch is his pity and compaſſion towards them, that he will be ſure to have a care of them. The Lord is all that to his people, and will be all that to his people, yea, and infinitely more than that which *Iſis Mammoſa* was to the Egyptians, a God full of dugs; and whil'ſt he hath a breaſt there is no reaſon why his children ſhould fear the want of milk. That golden promiſe, *Heb.* 13. 5. were there no more, hath enough in it to ſteel and arm the ſoul againſt all inordinate cares. The Greek hath five Negatives, and may thus be rendered, *I will not, not leave thee, neither will I not, not forſake thee.* Five times, as one well obſerves, is this precious promiſe renewed, that we may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of its conſolations, that we may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of its glory. O Sirs, ſhall

οὐ μὴ οὐ μὴ οὐ μή, Never, in no wiſe, in no caſe; whatever I do, I will not do this, whatever ſhift I make.

ſhall the word, the promiſe, the proteſt of a King arm us and cheer us up againſt all inordinate cares, and ſhall not the word, the promiſe, the proteſt of the King of Kings ſo often repeated much more arm us againſt all baſe diſtruſtful and diſtracting cares? O Chriſtians, the remembrance of this bleſſed truth, that God is your portion, ſhould make you ſing care away, as that famous Martyr ſaid, *My ſoul is turned to her reſt, I have taken a ſweet nap in Chriſt's lap, and therefore I will now ſing away care, and will be careleſſe, according to my name.* If the ſenſe of Gods being a mans portion will not burn up all thoſe inordinate cares that commonly fills his head, and that diſturbs, and diſtracts, and racks his heart, I profeſſe I cannot tell what will. 'Twas a ſtrange ſpeech of *Socrates*, a Heathen; Since God is ſo careful for you (ſaith he) what need you be careful for any thing your ſelves? But

John Carleſs in a Letter to Mr. Philops. *Acts and Mon. fol.* 1742, &c.

Tenthly,

Tenthly, If God be the Saints portion, than all is theirs. As he said, *Christus meus & omnia*, Christ is mine, and all is mine; so may a Christian say, *Deus meus, & omnia mea*, God is mine, and all is mine. If God be thy portion, then heaven and earth are thine, then all the good, and all the glory of both worlds are thine, then all the upper and the nether springs are thine, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21. *All things are yours*; verſ. 22. *whether* Paul, *or* Apollo, *or* Cephas, *or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours.* The ſcope of the Apoſtle is not to ſhew that ſuch as are Saints, and have God for their portion have a civil and common intereſt in all mens earthly poſſeſſions; but it is to ſhew that all things are prepared, ordered, and ordained by God to ſerve the intereſt of his people, to work for the good of his people, and to help on the happineſſe and bleſſednesſe of his people. All the gifts, and all the graces, and 10.

and all the experiences, and all the excellencies, and all the mercies of the Ministers of the Gospel, whether they are ordinary or extraordinary, are all for the information, edification, confirmation, consolation, and salvation of the Church, and all the good and all the sweet of the creatures are to be let out for the good of the people of God, and for the comfort of the people of God, and for the incouragement of the people of God; all changes, all conditions, all occurrences shall be sure *to work together for their good* that have God for their portion. Whatever the present posture of things are, or whatever the future state of things shall be, yet they shall all issue in their good, in their profit, in their advantage that have God for their portion. Look, as the wife communicates in her husbands honour and wealth, and as the branches partake of the fatnesse and sweetnesse of the root, and as the members derive sense and motion from the

Rom. 8. 28.

the head; so the Saints communicate in all that good which in God is communicable to them. God is communicative, as the Fig-tree, the Vine, and the Olive is. O Sirs, if God be your portion, then every promise in the Book of God is yours, and every Attribute in the Book of God is yours, and every Priviledge in the Book of God is yours, and every Comfort in the Book of God is yours, and every Blessing in the Book of God is yours, and every Treasury in the Book of God is yours, and every Mercy in the Book of God is yours, and every Ordinance in the Book of God is yours, and every Sweet in the Book of God is yours; if God be yours, all is yours. When *Alexander* asked King *Porus* (who was then his prisoner) how he would be used? he answered in one word βασιλικῶς, like a King: *Alexander* again replying, Do you desire nothing else? No, saith he, all things are in βασιλικῷ, in this one

Plutarch in Apophtegm.

one word, like a King: so all things are in this one word, *The Lord is my portion*; he that hath God for his portion, hath all things, because God is all things, he is a good that contains all good in himself; all the good that is to be found in honours, in riches, in pleasures, in preferments, in husband, in wife, in children, in friends, &c. is to be found onely and eminently in God; you have all in that great God that is the Saints great all, *Col.* 3. 11. But

11. Eleventhly, If God be the Saints portion, and such a portion as I have at large discovered him to be; then certainly God is no injurious portion, no mischievous portion, no hurtful portion, no prejudicial portion; surely there can be no danger, no hazard, no hurt in having God for a mans portion. O but oftentimes earthly portions do a great deal of hurt, a great deal of mischief, they ruine mens bodies, they blast

blast and blot mens names, and they lay men open to such sins, and snares, and temptations, that for ever undoes their immortal souls. O what a Trappan are worldly portions to most men? yea, what fuel are they to corruption? and how often do they lay persons open to destruction? *Eccles.* 5. 13. *There is a sore evil which I have seen under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners therefore to their hurt.* Though riches in themselves are Gods blessings, yet through the corruptions that are in mens hearts they prove weapons of wickedness, and engines to evil: *There is a sore evil*, the Septuagint reads it, *infirmitas pessima*, a sore disease; *Pagnin* and *Arias Montanus* reads it *mala infirmitas*, an evil disease; others read it, *languor pessimus*, a sore weakness; the Hebrew word *Cholah* signifies such a sore evil as sticks close, and is not easily removed; they are kept a thousand thousand wayes for their hurt. *Latimer* in a Sermon before King *Edward*

Edward the ſixth, tells a ſtory of a rich man, that when he lay upon his ſick bed, ſome told him that came to viſit him, that by all they were able to diſcern he was a dead man, he was no man for this world; as ſoon as ever he heard theſe words (ſaith *Latimer*) what muſt I die? ſaid the ſick man; ſend for a Phyſician; wounds, ſides, heart, muſt I die, and leave theſe riches behind me? wounds, ſides, heart, muſt I die, and leave theſe things behind me; and nothing elſe could be got from him but wounds, heart, ſides, muſt I die, and leave theſe riches behind me? Do you think, Sirs, that riches were not kept for this mans hurt? without a peradventure in this mans heart was write the God of this preſent world.

And the ſame Father *Latimer* elſewhere ſaith, that if he had an enemy to whom it was lawful to wiſh evil, he would chiefly wiſh him great ſtore of riches, for then he ſhould never enjoy any quiet.

As

As I have read of one *Pheraulas*, a poor man, on whom King *Cyrus* bestowed so much that he knew not what to do with his riches; being wearied out with care in keeping of them, he desired to live quietly, though poor, as he had done before, than to possess all those riches with discontent; therefore he gave away all his wealth, desiring onely to enjoy so much as might relieve his necessities, and give him a quiet possession of himself.

Queen *Mary* said, when she was dying, that if they should open her when she was dead, they should finde *Calice* lying at the bottome of her heart, implying, that the loss of it broke her heart.

The Historian observes, that the riches of *Cyprus* invited the Romans to hazard many dangerous Fights for the conquering of it.

When the *Indians* had taken some of the *Spaniards*, who made

gold their god, they filled their mouths with it, and so choaked them, they melted their gold, and poured it down their throats, resolving that they should have their fill of gold, who preferred gold before the lives and souls of men. How many millions of bodies and souls have the *Spaniards* destroyed to possess themselves of the riches of the West-*Indies*? But let me a little further shew you, how hurtful, how dangerous and pernicious earthly riches, earthly portions are oftentimes to their owners; and this I shall do by a brief induction of these particulars.

1. Not only the History of the ten persecutions, but also all other Histories do very strongly evince this.

First, Riches incourage and advantage persons to make the strongest and the stoutest opposition against any thing that is good; rich persons usually are the greatest opposers both of religion and religious persons, *James* 2. 6, 7. *But ye have despised the poor; do not rich men oppresse you, and draw you before the judgement-seats? Do not they blas-*

spheme

sphemie that worthy Name by which ye are called? and this you may see also in the rich Citizens of *Jerusalem*, & in King *Herod*; & the very same spirit you may run and read in the Scribes and Pharises, who were the rich and the great men of the times, and the very same opposing spirit lives and works strongly in the hearts of many great ones this day. But

Secondly, Earthly portions do estrange the heart from God, as you see in the prodigal, *Luke* 15. and in those wealthy Monsters that *say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him? Job* 21. 13, 14, 15. 2.

But

Thirdly, As earthly portions do estrange the soul from God; so they do often swell the soul, and puff up the soul. *Salvian* counts pride the rich mans inheritance; mens minds ebbe and flow with 3. Ps. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, &c.

their means, their blood commonly rises with their outward good. Pride, saith *Bernard*, is the rich mans Cousin, it blows him up like a bladder with a quill, it makes him grow secure, and so prepares him for sudden ruine; so that he may well sing his part with those sad souls, *What hath pride profited us? or what profit hath the pomp of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like as a shadow, and as a post that passeth by*, Wisd. 5. 8, 9. But

4. Fourthly, Earthly riches commonly cast men into a deep sleep of security; thus they served *David* in that *Psal.* 30. 6, 7. and thus they served the fool in the Gospel, *Luke* 12. 16--22. and thus they served the old world; and so they did *Sodome* & *Gomorrah* afterwards, and so they did the two Kings of *Midian*, *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, and their Hosts, *Judg.* 8. 11, 12. and so they did the people of *Laish*, in that *Judg.* 18. 6--28. and so the peace, plenty, and prosperity of the *Bohemians*

Amos 1. 12. to the 18. ponder the words.

hemians cast them into so great a security, that they began to grow very loose and base in their lives, and very cold and careless in the things of God, and in all their soul-concernments; insomuch that many of their most pious and prudent men did presage, that certainly some horrible storm would suddenly arise, and that some dreadful tempest without all peradventure would beat upon them; and accordingly it came to passe. *Alexander* slew him whom he found asleep on the watch; and God finding the *Bohemians* in a deep sleep of sin and security, he brought the devouring sword upon them. *Mercury* could not kill *Argus*, till he had cast him into a sleep, and with an inchanted rod closed his eyes: No more can the Devil or the World hurt any man, till by dandling of him on the knee of prosperity, they come to lull him asleep in the bed of security. But

5. Fifthly, Earthly riches do frequently divert the ſouls of men from imbracing and cloſing with the golden ſeaſons and opportunities of grace. Riches are the thorns that choak the Word, and that make men barren and unfruitful under the Word. Rich *Felix* had no leiſure to hear poor *Paul*, though the hearing of a Sermon might have ſaved his ſoul, and made him happy in both worlds; and the rich fool in the Goſpel was ſo taken up in pulling down his Barnes, and in building of them greater, and in beſtowing of his fruits and his goods, that he had no time to prevent the ruine of his ſoul; and *Dives* was ſo taken up with his riches, pomp, ſtate, and with his royal apparel, royal attendance, and royal fare, that he never minded heaven, nor never dreaded hell, til he did awake with everlaſting flames about his ears. *Sicily* is ſo full of ſweet flowers, that dogs cannot hunt there: and ſo what do all the ſweet pro-

Matth. 13. 22.

Acts 24. 24.--ult.

Luke 12. 15. to the 22.

Ch. 16. 19. to the end

Diodorus Siculus.

fits,

fits, pleasures, and preferments of this world, but make men lose the scent of grace, the scent of glory, the scent of holinesse, and the scent of happinesse. 'Tis true, rich men will have their earing times, and their drinking times, and their trading times, and their sporting times, and their sleeping times, & that which is worse, their sinning-times, &c. But ah how rare is it to see rich men cover after hearing times, and praying times, and reading times, and meditating times, and mourning times, and repenting times, and reforming times: Rich men will have time for every thing, but to honour God, exalt Christ, obey the Spirit, love the Saints, attend Ordinances, and save their own immortal souls. O the time, the thoughts, the strength, the spirits that rich men spend and consume upon their riches, whil'st their precious souls lie a bleeding to

Some say, where gold grows, no plant will prosper; certainly, where riches bear the bell, no good, no grace will thrive or prosper.

death, and an eternity of misery is posting upon them. But

6. Sixthly, Earthly riches commonly load the soul with a multitude of cares, fears, griefs, and vexations, which do mightily disturb the soul, distract the soul, yea, often rack, torture, and torment the soul. What if such a friend should be unfaithful to his trust? what if such a Ship should miscarry? what if such an one should break, that owes me so much? what if my title to such a Lordship should not prove good? what if flawes be found in my Evidences for such and such Lands? what if fire should consume my habitation? what if thiefs should rob me of my treasure? &c. and what do all these what's tend to, but to break a mans heart in a thousand pieces? But

7. Seventhly, Earthly riches many times are fuel for the greatest and the grossest sins; as pride, oppression

oppreſſion, revenge, cruelty, tyranny, gluttony, drunkennelie, wantonnieſſe, and all manner of uncleannieſſe and filthinelle: Riches are a Bawd to thoſe very ſins that require the largeſt ſtock to maintain them. Vices are more coſtly than vertues; vertue obſerves a mean, but vice knowes none; vice is all for extreams, witneſſe the prodigious wickednelſe of theſe tim s. But

Compare theſe Scriptures together, Pſal. 73 1---13. Deut. 32. 15, 16, 17. Jer. 5. 7, 8. Hoſ. 13. 6. James 5. 1. to Verſ. 7.

Eighthly, Earthly riches are many times reſerved as witneſſes againſt the rich in the great day of their account, *James* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you: Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten; your gold and ſilver is cankered, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſſe againſt you, and ſhall eat your fleſh as it were fire; ye have heaped treaſure together for the laſt dayes:* The ruſt of the rich mans cankered gold and his moth-eaten apparel ſhall be brought in as dreadful wit-

8.

witneſſes againſt him in the great day. The Poet feigned *Pluto* to be the God of riches, and of hell too, as if they were inſeparable. By all theſe particulars you ſee how hurtful, how prejudiciall earthly portions often prove to their owners.

O but now God is a portion that will never hurt a man, that will never harm a man, that will never in the leaſt prejudice a man. Among all the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, there is not one to be found that will give in his witneſſe againſt this ſweet and bleſſed Truth that I have aſſerted; and among all the Saints on earth you ſhall not finde one, but will with both hands readily ſubſcribe to this glorious Maxime, *viz. That God is ſuch a portion, that hath never hurt them, that hath never harm'd them, yea, that he is ſuch a portion that hath done them good all their dayes, and one upon whom they have lived, and by whom they have been maintained ever ſince they hung upon the breaſts.* Holy

Heb. 12. 22, 23.

Pſal. 22. 9.

Poly-

Polycarp hit it, when he said, This sixty eight years have I served the Lord, and he never did me any hurt; and shall I now forsake him? Surely no. But now earthly riches, for the most part, do a world of mischief and hurt to their owners. O the souls that earthly riches have pierced thorow and thorow with many sorrows! O the minds that earthly riches have blinded! O the hearts that earthly riches have hardned! O the consciences that earthly riches have benummed! O the wills that earthly riches have perverted! O the affections that earthly riches have disordered! O the lives that earthly riches have corrupted! and O the souls that earthly riches have destroyed. But

Ninthly and lastly, Earthly riches, for the most part, make men unwilling to die; O how terrible is the King of Terrours to the rich and the great ones of the world,

A great man wrote thus a little before his death, *Spes & fortuna valete.*

world, 1 *Sam.* 28.20. *Dan.* 5.1---7. And so *Henry Beauford*, that rich and wretched Cardinal, in the reign of *Henry* the sixth, perceiving death at hand, spoke thus, Wherefore should I die being so rich? if the whole Realm would save my life, I am able either by policy to get it, or by riches to buy it; fie, quoth he, will not Death be hired? will money do nothing? It is reported that Queen *Elizabeth* could not indure so much as to hear Death named; and *Sigusmund* the Emperour, and *Lewis* the eleventh, King of *France*, straitly charged all their servants, that when they saw them sick, they should never dare to name that bitter word Death in their ears. *Vitellius*, an Emperour of *Rome*, (a notorious glutton, as you may easily judge, by his having at one supper two thousand fishes, and seven thousand birds) when he could not flie Death, he made himself drunk, that he might not be sensible of the pangs of Death. 'Twas a very prudent and

Erasmus hit it, when he said, *Timor mortis pejor quam ipsa mors.*

and Christian speech of *Charles* the fifth to the Duke of *Venice*, who when he had shewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and earthly Paradise, instead of admiring it or him for it, he only returned him this grave and serious *Memento*, *Hec sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*, These are the things which make us unwilling to die, &c. And by daily experience we finde that of all men wealthy men are most unwilling to die. O but now God is such a portion as fits and disposes the soul to die, yea, as makes the soul look & long for death, and that makes death more desireable than life it self. A man that hath God for his portion, that hath God in his armes, may well sing it out with old *Simeon*, *Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes hath seen thy salvation*; and with *Paul*, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; and with the Church, *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the*

Luk. 2. 25, 29, 30.

Phil. 1. 23.

the mountain of spices, Cant. 8. ult. and, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, Rev. 22. 20. Did Christ die for me, that I might live with him? I will not therefore desire to live long from him; all men go willingly to see him whom they love, and shall I be unwilling to die, that I may see him whom my soul loves? Surely no. *Augustine* longed to die, that he might see that head that was once crowned with thorns. The dying words of my young Lord *Harrington* were these, *O my God, when shall I be with thee?* *Cyprian* could receive the cruellest sentence of death with a *Deo gratias*; and holy *Andrew* saluted the Cross on which he was to be crucified, saying, *Take me from men, and restore me to my Master*: And so *Lawrence Saunders*, when he was come to the stake at which he was to be burnt, he kissed it, saying, *Welcome the Crosse of Christ, welcome everlasting life*. But

12. Twelfthly. If God be the Saints portion, O then let the Saints still think

think of God, and look upon God under this notion; A man that hath God for his portion ſhould alwayes have very high, noble, ſweet and precious thoughts of God: It becomes not thoſe that have God for their portion to be alwayes looking upon God as an angry God, or as a diſpleaſed Father, or as an inceenſed Judge, or as an inraged enemy, or as a bitter friend. When God would make known his Name, his Nature, his Glory to *Moſes*, he proclaimes himſelf to be, *The Lord God, merciful, and gracious, long-ſuffering and abundant in goodneſſe and truth, keeping mercies for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin.* And certainly to keep up ſuch precious thoughts and notions as theſe are of God, is that work of works that lies upon every mans hand that hath God for his portion. O Sirs, there is a very great aptneſſe and proneneſſe, even in thoſe that have God for their portion, to have black, dark, hard, diſmal, and dreadful thoughts

Exod. 34. 6,7.

Psal. 77. & Psa 88. Job 3. Psal. 73. 11, 13, 13, 14.

thoughts and apprehensions of God, as you may see in *Asaph*, *Heman*, *Job*, *David*, &c. By nature we are as full of hard thoughts of God, as hell is full of sinne: and where the heart is not mightily over-aw'd by the Spirit of God, and over-power'd by the grace of God, there all manner of dark and dismal apprehensions of God abounds: Besides, Satan knows very well, that our corrupt natures are made up of sad and hard thoughts of God; and therefore he will use all his power and craft to blow up every spark (every hard thought of God) into a flame, especially when outward troubles and inward distresses are upon us; what sayes Satan, Dost thou think that God loves thee, O Christian, when he deals thus sharply and severely with thee? doth he pretend kindnesse to thee, and yet hide his face from thee, and set thee up as a mark to shoot at? how can he be thy friend, who hath cast thee down at thine enemies

feet,

feet, and given thee up into their pawes and jawes? how canst thou think that he hath any pity and compassion towards thee, who makes no better provision for thee? what vanity is it to believe that he will give thee a crown, that denies thee a crust? and that he will give thee an house not made with hands, and yet suffer thee to be turned out of house and home? and that he will do so much for thee in another world, who doth so little for thee in this world? &c. And thus Satan takes his opportunities to provoke corrupt nature, & to fill the soul with hard thoughts of God. And certainly, that Christian is a very great stranger to his own heart, that is not able to say from experience, that it is one of the highest and hardest works in this world to keep up good & gracious thoughts of God, to keep up honourable and noble thoughts of God in a suffering condition, or under dark and dismal dispensations. O but

now those that have God for their portion, they should abandon and abhor all hard thoughts of God, yea, how severe soever the dealings of God are towards them, yet it is their duty and their glory to keep up very sweet & precious thoughts of God. O Sirs, the more choice and honourable thoughts you keep up of God in your own souls, the more you will love the Lord, and the more you will delight in the Lord, and the more content and satisfaction you will take in the Lord. Such Christians that take a pleasure to be still a representing of God to themselves in the most hideous, terrible, and amazing shapes, they kill their love and their joy, and they create a hell of torments in their own souls. Well, Christians, let me put a cluster of the Grapes of *Canaan* into your hands at once, and that by telling of you, that the more glorious & blessed thoughts you keep up in your souls of God, the more spiritual, the more fre-

Psal. 73. 1.

quent,

quent, the more fervent, the more abundant, the more constant, and the more unwearied you will be in the work of the Lord, and the more all your graces will be acted, exercised, strengthened, and increased, yea, and the more your evidences for heaven will be cleared, your gracious experiences multiplied, your communion with God raised, your way to glory facilitated, and all your sufferings sweetned; & therefore never let noble & precious thoughts of God die in your souls: Though he frown upon thee, O Christian, yet say, he is thy portion; and though he chides thee, yet say, he is thy portion; and though he corrects thee, yet say, he is thy portion; and though he deserts thee, and carries it strangely towards thee, yet say, he is thy portion; and though he snatches many a mercy from thee, yet say, he is thy portion; and though he multiplies thy burthens upon thee, yet say, he is thy portion; and though he writes bitter

things against thee, yet say, he is thy portion; yea, though he should passe a sentence of death upon thee, yet still say, he is thy portion: O Christians, this would still raise an heaven in your hearts, if under all dispensations you would still look upon God as your portion, and live upon God as your portion. But

13. Thirteenthly, If God be a believers portion, then never let a believer be afraid to die, or unwilling to die; let them be afraid to die that have onely the world for their portion here, and hell for their portion hereafter; but let not a Saint be afraid of death that hath for his portion the Lord of life: A man that hath God for his portion should rather court death than tremble at it; he should rather sweetly welcome it, than turn his back upon it; for death to such an one is but the way to paradise, the way to all heavenly delights, the way to those everlasting

See twenty Arguments in my *String of Pearls* to move you to be willing to die, from pag. 169. to pag. 212.

laſting ſprings of pleaſure that are at Gods right hand, the way to life, immortality, and glory, and the way to a clear, full, conſtant and eternal fruition of God. *Auguſtine* upon thoſe words, *Exod.* 33.20,21. *Thou canſt not ſee my face and live*, makes this ſhort, but ſweet reply, *Then Lord let me die that I may ſee thy face.* Death is a bridge that leads to the paradiſe of God; all the hurt that it can do is to bring a believer to a full enjoyment of his portion. When *Modeſtus* the Emperours Lieutenant threatned to kill *Bazil*, he anſwered, If that be all, I fear not, yea, your Maſter cannot more pleaſure me, than in ſending me unto my heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I deſire to haſten. Old Alderman *Jordan* uſed to ſay, That Death would be the beſt friend he had in the world, and that he would willingly go forth to meet it; or rather ſay with holy *Paul*, *O Death, where is thy ſting?* triumphing over it.

Pſal.16.ult.

Bernard ſaith, that he heard his brother *Gerard*, when juſt in dying, rejoyce, and triumphingly ſay, *Jam mors mihi non ſtimulus ſed jubilus.*

it. What is a drop of vinegar put into an Ocean of wine? what is it for one to have a rainy day, who is going to take possession of a Kingdome? A Dutch Martyr feeling the flame to come to his beard, *Ah, said he, what a small pain is this, to be compared to the glory to come?* *Lactantius* boasts of the braveneſſe of that ſpirit that was upon the Martyrs in his time; our children and women (not to ſpeak of men, ſaith he) do in ſilence overcome their tormenters, and the fire cannot ſo much as fetch a ſigh from them. *John Noyes* took up a fagot at the fire, and kiſſed it, ſaying, *Bleſſed be the time that ever I was born to come to this preferment.* Never did Neckarchief become me ſo well as this chain, ſaid *Alice Driver*, when they faſtened her to the ſtake to be burnt; Mr. *Bradford* put off his cap, and thanked God, when the Keepers Wife brought him word that he was to be burn't on the morrow; Mr. *Taylor* fetcht a friſk, when he was come

Acts & Mon. 813.

come neer the place where he was to suffer; *Henry* and *John* (two *Augustine* Monks) being the first that were burnt in *Germany*, and Mr. *Rogers* the first that was burnt in Queen *Maries* dayes, did all sing in the flames; and be of good cheer, said the woman-martyr to her husband that was to suffer with her; for though we have but an ill dinner on earth, we shall sup with Christ in heaven: and what said *Justine Martyr* to his murtherers, in behalf of himself and his fellow-martyrs, *You may kill us, but you can never hurt us.* Ah Christians, how can you read over these choice instances, and not blush, and not be ashamed to consider what a readiness, what a forwardnesse, and what a noble willingness there was in these brave Worthies to die and go to heaven, and to be fully possest of their God, of their portion, whil'st you shrug at the very thoughts of death, and frequently put that day farre from you, and had rather with *Peter* fall

Mat. 17. 4. Phil. 1. 23.

upon *building of Tabernacles*, then with *Paul, desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*. O Christians, how justly may that father be angry with his child that 'is unwilling to come home? and how justly may that husband be displeased with his wife, who is unwilling to ride to him in a rainy day, or to crosse the Sea to enjoy his company? and is not this your case? is not this just your case, who have God for your portion, and yet are unwilling to die, that you may come to a full enjoyment of your portion? But,

14.

2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Fourteenthly and lastly, If God be the Saints portion, then let all the Saints give all diligence to make this clearly and fully out to their own souls, that God is their portion. Next to a mans having God for his portion, 'tis the greatest mercy in this world for a man to know, that God is his portion, and to be able groundedly to say with the Church, *The Lord is my portion*,

portion ſaith my ſoul. Now this is a work that may be done; I ſuppoſe there is never a believer on earth but may attain unto this perſonal evidence and certainty of knowledge, that God is his portion; expreſs promiſes ſpeaks out ſuch a thing as this is, *Zech.* 13. 9. *They ſhall call upon my Name, and I will hear them; I will ſay, it is my people, and they ſhall ſay, it is my God*: ſo *Ezek.* 34. 30. *Thus ſhall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the houſe of* Iſrael *are my people, ſaith the Lord*; Pſal. 9. 18. *For the patient abiding of the meek ſhall not be forgotten for ever.* God will as ſoon put the faith of reliance, and the faith of aſſurance to a bluſh, as he will put the faith of expectance to a bluſh; *Pſal.* 22. 26. *The meek ſhall eat and be ſatisfied, they ſhall praiſe the Lord that ſeek him; your heart ſhall live for ever*: Firſt or laſt, ſuch as ſeek him ſhall have ſuch an anſwer of their prayers, as ſhall turn their prayers into praiſes, and their petitions into thankſ-

Heb. 10. 37. Μικρὸν ὅσον, ὅσον. Here are two Diminutives in the Greek, a little, little while, to note, that God will not in the leaſt delay his coming to his people.

thanksgivings; *Pſal.* 84. 11. *The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* God will be an univerſal, all-ſufficient, and ſatisfactory good to them that walk uprightly; the Lord is as full of goodneſs as the Sun is full of light, and he will as freely, and as fully, and as impartially communicate his goodneſſe to them that walk uprightly, as the Sun doth her light both to the juſt and the unjuſt. As under the name of no good thing will he with-hold, all temporal good things are to be underſtood; ſo under the name of grace all ſpiritual good things are to be underſtood; and under the name of glory all eternal good things are to be underſtood. And now if God will give all ſpiritual and all eternal good things to his people, how can he then but ſooner or later give a cleer and ſatisfactory evidence into his peoples boſomes, that he is their portion? And not onely expreſs promiſes, but

Matth. 5. 45.

but alſo the graces of the Spirit and the teſtimony of the Spirit confirms the ſame thing; the language of every ſaving grace is this, The Lord is thy portion, O thou believing ſoul; and the language and teſtimony of the Spirit is the ſame, *Rom.* 8. 15. *Ye have received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* Verſ. 16. *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſſe with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God.* Shall an inſtinct in nature teach young ones to know their Damms, and ſhall not the Spirit of God by a divine inſtinct teach the Saints to know God to be their God, and to be their portion alſo? Surely yes; though this or that particular Chriſtian may go to his grave without a ſatisfactory evidence in his own boſome, that God is his portion, yet in an ordinary courſe at firſt or laſt God doth give his people ſome aſſurance that he is their portion, yea, rather than they ſhall always live or die without aſſurance of their ſalvation; and

and that he is their portion, he will work a miracle to assure them of his love.

I have both heard and read of a rare story of Mrs. *Honywood* a famous professor of the Gospel, and one that for many years together lay under the burthen of a wounded spirit, and was much troubled in mind for want of assurance that God was her portion, and that she should be saved from wrath to come: at length there came a godly Minister to her, who indeavoured to settle her faith and hope in Christ; and pressing many Gospel-promises upon her, she took it with a kinde of indignation and anger that he should offer to present any promises to her, to whom (as she thought) they did not belong; and having a *Venice*-glasse in her hand, she held it up, and said, Speak no more to me of salvation, for I shall as surely be damn'd, as this poor brittle glasse shall be broke against the wall, throwing

throwing it with all her force to break it; but it so pleased God, that by a miraculous providence the glasse was preserved whole; the Minister beholding the miracle, took up the glasse, and said unto her, *Behold, God must work a miracle for you before you will believe*: and for ever after that day she had very strong assurance of her salvation, and that God was her portion, and so lived and died in a sweet and comfortable sense of the love and favour of God.

Now to provoke you to labour with all your might to attain to a clear, personal, satisfactory evidence in your own bosomes, that God is your portion; do but seriously consider and lay to heart the rare and singular advantages that will redound to your souls by this meanes. I shall onely touch upon some, by which your selves may guesse at others.

First, By this means your hearts will 1.

will come to be fixed, setled, and established: A mans soul never comes to be fixed and setled, by knowing in the general that God is the Saints portion, but by a personal evidence and certainty of knowledge that he is his particular portion: whil'st a mans particular propriety is unsetled, all is unsetled in his soul; but when a mans particular propriety is setled, when he can say, this God is my God, and the Lord is my portion, then all is setled, then all is at peace in the soul. A man that hath God for his portion, if he do not know it, will still be like a Ship at sea in the midst of a storm, toss't here and there, and now rowling on one side, and then on the other, and never quiet, never lying still; but a man that hath God for his portion, and knows it, he is like a Ship in a good Harbour that lies quiet and still, yea, he is like Mount *Zion* that cannot be removed. But

Psa. 57.7. Ps. 108 1. Psal. 112. 7.

Secondly,

Secondly, A clear, personal evidence that God is a mans portion will rid his soul of all sinful doubts. O Christians, now your hearts are as full of doubts, as hell is full of darknesse; one day you doubt whether your graces are true, and another day you doubt whether your comforts are true; now you doubt of your Saintship, and anon of your Sonship, and then of your Heirship; sometimes you doubt of your communion with God, sometimes you doubt of your acquaintance with God, and sometimes you doubt of your acceptance with God; one hour you doubt of the favour of God, and the next hour you doubt of your accesse to God: And as it is thus with you, so it will be thus with you, till you come to have some clear satisfaction in your own spirits, that God is your portion. O Christians, had you but once a personal evidence in your own bosomes that God is your portion, all those doubts that are bred

2.

Luke 24. 14 15.

bred and fed by ignorance and unbelief, and that rob the soul of all joy comfort, and content, and that render men Babes in Christianity, and that cast reproach upon God, Christ, and the Promises, &c. and that do most gratifie and advantage Satan to tempt and try your souls, would vanish and disperse as the Clouds do before the Sun when it shines in its brightnesse; till a Christians eyes be opened to see God to be his portion, his heart will be full of doubts and perplexities. Though *Mary Magdalen* was very neer to Christ, yet she stands sighing, mourning, and complaining, *That they had stollen away her Lord.* A Christian may have God for his portion, yet till he comes to see God to be his portion he will spend his dayes in sighing, mourning, and complaining; O Christians, till you come to see God to be your portion, your doubts will lie down with you, and rise with you; they will talk with you, and walk with you, till

John 20. 13,14,15,16.

till they make your lives a very hell. 'Twas an excellent expression of *Luther*, The whole Scripture (saith he) doth principally aim at this thing, That we should not doubt, but that we should hope, trust, and believe that God is a merciful, bountiful, and gracious God to his people; And what will bring a mans heart over to answer to this blessed aime of the Scripture? certainly nothing below an assurance, that God is his portion It was a noble resolution of blessed *Bradford*, who in one of his Epistles, saith thus, *O Lord sometimes methinks I feel it so with me, as if there were no difference between my heart and the hearts of the wicked; my mind is as blind as theirs, and my will as stout, stubborn, and rebellious as theirs, and my affections as much disordered as theirs, and my conscience as much benummed and stupified as theirs, and my heart as hard and flintie as theirs, &c. shall I therefore conclude, that thou art not my father? nay, I will rather reason otherwise* (saith he) *I do*

believe thou art my Father, I will come unto thee, that thou mayeſt enlighten this blind mind of mine, and bend and bow this ſtout and ſtubborn will of mine, and that thou mayeſt put order into theſe diſordered affections of mine, and that thou mayeſt put life and quickneſſe into this ſtupified and benummed conſcience of mine, and that thou mayeſt put ſoftneſſe and tenderneſſe into this hard and flintie heart of mine: And thus he nobly reaſoned himſelf, and believed himſelf out of all his fears and doubts. There is no ſuch way for a man to be rid of all his doubts, as to live in the ſight and faith of this truth, that God is his portion.

Plutarch reports of one, who would not be reſolved of his doubts, becauſe he would not loſe the pleaſure in ſeeking for reſolution, like to him that would not have his Phyſician to quench the thirſt he felt in his Ague, becauſe he would not loſe the pleaſure of drinking; and like thoſe that would not be freed from their ſins, be-

because they would not lose the pleasure of sinning: But I hope better things of all those that have God for their portion, than to find them in love with their doubts, or to be unwilling to be rid of their doubts. Next to a mans going to hell, it is one of the greatest afflictions in the world for a man alwayes to live in doubts about his going to heaven; Next to damnation it is one of the greatest troubles that can attend a Christian to be alwayes exercised and perplexed with doubts about his salvation; Next to being damn'd, 'tis the hell of hells to live in continual fears of damnation: Now the onely way to prevent all this, is to know that God is your portion. But

Thirdly, A clear, personal evidence, that God is a mans portion, will exceedingly sweeten all the crosses, losses, and changes that shall attend him in this world: *Habakkuk* knew that God was the God of his salvation; and that he 3:

was his portion, and therefore he
Hab. 3. 17, 18. rejoyces *though the Fig-tree did not blossome, and though there were no fruit in the vines, and though the labour of the olive did fail, and the fields did yield no meat, and the flocks were cut off from the fold, and there were no herd in the stalls*: And the same noble temper was upon those Worthies, in *Heb.* 10. 34. *They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an induring substance*; they took joyfully the spoiling of their earthly portions being well assured in their own souls that they should enjoy an heavenly portion, an everlasting
1 Cor. 5. 6. to the 12. portion. And so the Apostles knew that they had an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and this carried them bravely thorow honour and dishonour, thorow evil report and good report, and thorow all weaknesses, sicknesses, distresses, wants, dangers, and death; and this made their heavy afflictions light, and
2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. their long afflictions short, and

their

their bitter afflictions sweet; this was that tree which being cast in the waters of *Marah* made them sweet; and this was that that did unsling all their crosses, losses and reproaches, and that made them rejoyce and sing under those very burthens and trials that would have broke the necks, backs, and hearts of others. When a man hath a clear personal evidence that God is his portion, then no outward changes will make any considerable change in him. Though *Laban* had changed *Jacobs* wages ten times, yet *Jacob* was *Jacob* still; let times change, and men change, and Powers change, and Nations change, yet a man that hath God for his portion, and knows it, will never change his countenance, nor change his Master, nor change his service, nor change his work, nor change his way; under all changes he will still be (*Semper idem*) alwayes the same. Many great and dreadful changes past upon *Joseph*, but yet under all *Josephs home abode* in

Exod. 15. 23, 24, 25.

Acts 5. & Ch. 16.

Gen. 31. 7.

Gen. 49. 23, 24.

in strength. When a man knows that God is his portion, whatever changes may passe upon him, yet his bowe will still abide in strength. *Marcellus* the Pope would not change his name, according to the custome of other Popes, to shew his immutability, and that he was no changeling; but how many are there in these dayes, who were look't upon as better men, who have changed their names, their notes, their coats, their principles, their practises, and all for worldly advantages: these changelings that change from better to worse, and from naught to be very naught, yea stark naught, are the worst and naughtiest of men, and deserve to be hang'd in chains; and certainly when the wrath of God breaks forth, these changelings shall be as stubble before it. God abhors none as he doth those who run from him to serve other lords, and who gad about to change their way, *Jer.* 2. 36, 37. *Why gaddest thou about so much to change*

Mal. 4. 1.
Heb. 10. 38.

change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria; yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head; for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them. There is nothing that will keep a man from apostacy, and from making a defection from God, his wayes, his worship, his glory, &c. like a blessed perswasion, that God is his portion, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5–11. But

Fourthly, A clear personal evidence that God is a mans portion will exceedingly raise and advance the comfort and joy of a mans heart; 'tis not meerly my having of God for my portion, but 'tis my seeing, 'tis my knowing, 'tis my fruition of God as my portion, that is the true spring of all delight, comfort, and consolation. When a mans interest in God is clear, then all the precious promises will be full wells of salvation, and full breasts of con- 4.

2 Pet. 1. 4. Iſa. 12. 3. Ch. 66. 11. Without delight the ſoul cannot live; take away all delight, & the ſoul dies, ſaith *Auguſtine.*

ſolation to him, but till then they will be but as dry breaſts, as barren Heaths, as a fruitleſſe Wilderneſſe, and as empty Wells; whil'ſt a man is doubtful whether God be his God, 'tis certain that the ſpring of joy and comfort will run low in his ſoul; whil'ſt a man lives in fear that his title and intereſt is not good, how can he rejoyce? When a mans intereſt in God is clear, then his heaven of joy begins: a man that hath God for his portion, and knows it, cannot but live in a paradiſe of joy, and walk in a paradiſe of joy, and work in a paradiſe of joy, and eat in a paradiſe of joy, and recreate himſelf in a paradiſe of joy, and reſt in a paradiſe of joy; he cannot but have an heaven of joy within him, and an heaven of joy about him, and an heaven of joy over him; all his looks will ſpeak out joy within, and all his words will ſpeak out joy within, and all his works will ſpeak out joy within, and all his wayes will ſpeak out joy within.

I

I remember a notable ſaying of one, How ſweet was it to me of a ſudden to be without theſe ſweet vanities! and theſe things which I was afraid to loſe, with joy I let go, for thou who art the true and only ſweetneſs, didſt caſt out thoſe from me, and inſtead of them didſt enter in thy ſelf, who art more delightful than all pleaſure, and more clear than all light. When a mans intereſt in God is clear, his joy will be full; when a man is happy, and knows it, he cannot but rejoyce; when a man hath God for his portion, and knows it, all the world cannot hinder the ſtrong conſolations of God from riſing high in his ſoul: Why have the Saints in heaven more joy and delight than the Saints on earth, but becauſe they have a clearer and a fuller knowledge of their intereſt and propriety in God than the others have? The knowledge of a mans propriety in God is the comfort of comforts; propriety makes every comfort a pleaſureable

Auguſt. in his Confeſſions.

Joh. 16.24

able comfort, a delightful comfort. When a man walks in a fair Meadow, and can write *Mine* upon it, and into a pleaſant Garden, and can write *Mine* upon it, and into a fruitful Corn-field, and can write *Mine* upon it, and into a ſtately Habitation, and can write *Mine* upon it, and into a rich Myne, and can write *Mine* upon it, O how doth it pleaſe him? how doth it delight him? how doth it joy and rejoyce him? Of all words this word *Meum* is the ſweeteſt and the comfortableſt: Ah, when a man can look upon God, and write *Meum*; when he can look upon God, and ſay, This God is my God for ever and ever; when he can look upon God, and ſay, this God is my portion; when he can look upon God, and ſay with *Thomas, My Lord and my God*, how will all the ſprings of joy riſe in his ſoul! O who can but joy to be owner of that God that fills heaven and earth with his fulneſſe? who can but rejoyce to have him

John 20.

for

for his portion, in having of whom he hath all things, in having of whom he can want nothing. The ſerious thoughts of our propriety in God will add much ſweet to all our ſweets, yea, it will make every bitter ſweet; when a man ſeriouſly thinks it is my God that cheares me with his preſence, it is my God that ſupports me with his power, it is my God that guides me by his counſel, it is my God that ſupplies me with his goodneſſe, and it is my God that bleſſes all my bleſſings to me; it is my God that afflicts me in love, it is my God that hath broken me in my eſtate, and in my credit, it is my God that hath ſorely viſited ſuch a child, it is my God that hath paſt a ſentence of death upon ſuch a friend, it is my God that hath thus ſtraitned me in my liberty, and it is my God that hath thus caſt me down at my enemies feet, &c. how doth theſe thoughts cheer up the ſpirit of a man, and make every bitter ſweet, and every burthen light unto him.

A beautiful face is at all times pleasing to the eye, but then especially when there is joy manifested in the countenance; joy in the face puts a new beauty upon a person, and makes that which before was beautiful to be exceeding beautiful, it puts a lustre upon beauty; and so doth holy joy put a divine beauty and lustre upon all the wayes of God, and upon all the people of God; and therefore it highly concerns all Christians, as they would have an heavenly beauty, lustre, and glory upon them, to rejoyce, and that they may rejoyce, it doth as highly concern them to know their interest and propriety in God. But

5. Fifthly, A clear personal evidence that God is a mans portion will very much raise him in his communion with God, and exceedingly sweeten his fellowship with God; there are no Christians on earth that have such high, such cho'ce, such free, such full, such sweet,

1 John 1.1, 2,3,4. 2Cor.13.14 Mans *summum bonum*

ſweet, and ſuch uninterrupted communion with God, as thoſe that have a clear ſight of their intereſt and propriety in God. The Spouſe in that Book of *Solomons Song*, again, and again, and again ſings and ſounds out her propriety and intereſt in Chriſt, *Cant.* 2. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his:* Cant. 6. 3. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine:* Cant. 7. 10. *I am my beloveds, and his deſire is towards me.* Now mark, how doth the ſenſe of this her propriety in Chriſt work? why it works very highly, very ſtrongly, very inflamingly, very affectionately; *Cant.* 1. 2, 3, 4. *Let him kiſſe me with the kiſſes of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine: Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy Name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the Virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the King hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoyce in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.* Verſ. 13. *A bundle of myrrhe is my*

ſtands in his communion with God, as Scripture and experience evidences. Pſa. 144. 15 My God and I am good company, ſaid famous Dr. *Sibs.*

my beloved unto me; he ſhall lie all night betwixt my breaſts. Chap. 2. 3, 4, 5, 6. *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons, I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet unto my taſte: He brought me to the Banqueting-houſe, and his Banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am ſick of love: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth imbrace me.* And Chap. 7. 5. *The King is held in the galleries.* The Spouſe had a clear ſight and a deep ſenſe of her intereſt and propriety in Chriſt, and O how high, how cloſe, how full, how ſweet is ſhe in her communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt! 'tis the ſight and ſenſe of propriety and intereſt that heightens and ſweetens that communion that is between husband and wife, father and child, brother and ſiſter, and friend and friend; ſo 'tis the ſight and ſenſe of a mans propriety and intereſt in God that heightens and ſweetens his communion and fel-

fellowſhip with God. A clear ſight of a mans intereſt and propriety in God will exceedingly ſweeten every thought of God, and every appearance of God, and every taſte of God, and every ſmile of God, and every communication of God, and every ordinance of God, and every work of God, and every way of God; yea, it will ſweeten every rod that is in the hand of God, and every wrinkle that is in the face of God; a man that ſees his intereſt in God will hang upon him, and truſt in him; though he ſhould write never ſuch bitter things againſt him, and though he ſhould deal never ſo ſeverely with him, yea, though he ſhould ſlay him, as you may ſee in *Job* 13. 15. He hit it, who ſaid, A man whoſe ſoul is converſant with God ſhall finde more pleaſure in the Deſart and in death, than in the Palace of a Prince. *Urbanus Regius* having one dayes converſe with *Luther*, ſaid, It was one of the ſweeteſt dayes that ever he had in all his life:

Pſal. 139. 17, 18.

Adam in vit. Regii, p. 78.

life: But if one dayes communion with *Luther* was so sweet; O how sweet must one dayes communion with God be! and therefore as ever you would have high, and full, and sweet communion with God, keep up a clear sight, a blessed sense of your interest and propriety in God. But

6. Sixthly, A clear personal evidence that God is a mans portion is a mans all in all. O Sirs, this is the life of your lives, and the life of your prayers, and the life of your praises, and the life of your confidences, and the life of your mercies, and the life of your comforts, and the life of your hopes, &c. A clear sight of your propriety in God is the very life of promises, the life of Ordinances, the life of Providences, the life of experiences, and the life of your gracious evidences; it is a pearl of price, it is your Paradise, it is Manna in a wilderness, it is water out of a Rock, it is a cloud by day, and

and a pillar of fire by night; it is *Jacobs* ladder, it is a salve for every sore, it is physick for every disease, it is a remedy against every malady, it is an anchor at Sea, and a shield on shore, it is a star to guide you, a staff to support you, a sword to defend you, a Pavilion to hide you, a fire to warm you, a banquet to refresh you, a City of refuge to secure you, and a Cordial to cheer you; and what would you have more? But

Seventhly and lastly, A clear personal evidence that God is a mans portion will exceedingly sweeten the thoughts of death, and all the approaches of death, and all the warnings and forerunners of death unto him; it will make a man look upon his last day as his best day, it will make a man look upon the King of terrours as the King of desires, it will make a man laugh at the shaking of the spear at the sounding of the trumpet, at the confused noise of the battel, at 7. Eccles. 7.1. Job 18.14.

garments rowled in blood, at the sighs and groans of the wounded, and at the heaps of the slain. 'Twas the Martyrs clear sight of their interest and propriety in God that made them complement with lions, and dare their persecutors, and to kisse the stake, and to sing and clap their hands in the midst of the flames, and to tread upon hot burning coals as upon beds of roses, and divinely to triumph over their tormenters; 'twas this that made the primitive Christians ambitious of Martyrdome, and that made them willingly and cheerfully lay down their lives, that they might *Eliah*-like mount to Heaven in fiery Chariots. A man that sees his propriety in God, knowes that death shall be the Funeral of all his sins, sorrows, afflictions, temptations, desertions, oppositions, vexations, oppressions, and persecutions, and he knows that death shall be the resurrection of his hopes, joyes, delights, comforts, and contentments,

ments, and that it shall bring him to a more clear, full, perfect, and constant enjoyment of God; and this makes him sweetly and triumphingly to sing it out, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* 1 *Cor.* 15. 35, 36, 37. and O that these seven Considerations might prevail with all your souls to be restlesse, till you have in your own bosomes clear and full satisfaction, that God is your portion. Now this last Inference leads me by the hand to an use of trial and examination. O Sirs, if God be the Saints portion, the believers portion, how highly doth it concern every one that looks upon himself, as a Saint, or as a believer, to search, try, and examine whether God be his portion, or no?

But you will say, how shall we know, whether God be our portion, or no? O, were all the world a lump of gold, and in our hands to dispose of, we would give it to know, that God is our portion; O the knowledge of this would be as *Quest.*

lite from the dead, it would create an heaven in our hearts on this ſide heaven, it would preſently put us into a paradiſe of pleaſure and delight; but ſtill the queſtion is, how ſhall we know it? 'tis an eaſie thing to ſay, that God is our portion; but how ſhall we come infallibly to know, that God is our portion?

Now to give clear and full ſatisfaction to this great and weighty Queſtion, I ſhall give in theſe following Anſwers, by which you may certainly and undoubtedly know, whether God be your portion, or no.

1. First, If God be thy portion, then thou haſt very ſweet, precious, high, and honourable thoughts of God; then thy thoughts will ſtill be running out after God, and thy meditations of him will be ſweet; a man

Lord, ſaith *Auſtine*, the more I meditate on thee, the ſweeter thou art unto me. *Hierome* calls meditation his paradiſe. And *Theophylact* calls it the very gate and portal by which we enter into glory. To think is to live, ſaith *Cicero*.

man that hath God for his portion is alwayes beſt, when his thoughts and meditations are running out moſt after God, *Pſal.* 104. 34. *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet, I will be glad in the Lord,* Pſal. 63. 5, 6. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied, as with marrow and fatneſſe, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed* (or *beds*, as the Hebrew hath it; *David* never bedded at home nor abroad, here nor there, but ſtill his thoughts were running out to God) *and meditate on thee in the night-watches.* Pſal. 139. 17, 18. *How precious alſo are thy thoughts unto me, O God? how great is the ſum of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number than the ſand: when I awake I am ſtill with thee.* The Pſalmiſt had very frequent, high, precious, and honourable thoughts of God, he valued nothing at ſo high a rate as ſweet and noble thoughts of God, and of his power, wiſdome, goodneſſe, faithfulneſſe, and gracioufneſſe, &c. *David* had ſuch

precious thoughts of God, and such great and glorious thoughts of God, and such infinite and innumerable thoughts of God, that he was as well able to number the sands of the Sea, as he was able to number them up: *And when I awake I was still with thee*; He was still a contemplating upon God, he did fall asleep with precious thoughts of God, and he did awake with precious thoughts of God; he did rise up with precious thoughts of God, and he did lie down with precious thoughts of God; he did go forth with precious thoughts of God, and he did return home with precious thoughts of God. Take a Christian when he is himself, when he is neither under sad desertions, nor black temptations, nor great afflictions, and he can as soon forget his own and his fathers house, the wife of his bosom, the fruit of his loynes, yea, he can as soon forget to eat his bread, as he can forget his God.

When

When *Alexander* the Great had overthrown *Darius*, King of *Persia*, he took among the spoils a most rich Cabinet full of the choicest Jewels that were in all the world; upon which there rise a dispute before him, to what use he should put the Cabinet, and every one having spent his judgment according to his fancy, the King himself concluded, that he would keep that Cabinet to be a Treasury to lay up the books of *Homer* in, which were his greatest joy and delight. A sanctified memory is a rich Cabinet full of the choicest thoughts of God; 'tis that rich Treasury wherein a Christian is still a laying up more and more precious thoughts of God, and more and more high and holy thoughts of God, and more and more honourable and noble thoughts of God, and more and more awful and reverend thoughts of God and more and more sweet and comfortable thoughts of God, and more and more tender and compassionate

Psa. 25.1. Ps.86.4. Psal.143.8. *Basil* calls meditation the Treasury, where all graces are locked up

paſſionate thoughts of God, &c. Take a Chriſtian in his ordinary courſe, and you ſhall finde that where-ever he is his thoughts are running out after God, and about what ever he is his thoughts are ſtill a running out after God; and into what company ſoever he is caſt whether they are good or bad, yet ſtill his thoughts are running out after God, &c.

Look, as an earthly minded man hath his thoughts and meditations ſtill exerciſed and taken up with the world, as you may ſee in *Haman*, whoſe heart and thoughts were taken up with his honours, preferments, riches, wife, children, and friends, &c. *Eſth.* 5. 10, 11, 12. *Nevertheleſſe* Haman *refrained himſelf, and when he came home he ſent and called for his friends and* Zereſh *his wife. And* Haman *told them of the glory of his*

The thoughts and hearts of the people of *Conſtantinople* were ſo extreamly ſet upon the world and running out after the world, that they were buying and ſelling in their ſhops even three dayes after that the Turks were within the walls of their City, & that was the reaſon that the ſtreets run down with their blood, and the blood of their wives and children.

his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Princes and ſervants of the King: Haman *ſaid moreover, yea* Eſther *the Queen did let no man come in with the King unto the banquet that ſhe had prepared but my ſelf, and to morrow am I invited unto her alſo with the King.* And the ſame ſpirit you may ſee working in thoſe that had made Gold their God, in that *Pſal.*49.10,11. *For he ſeeth that wiſe men die, likewiſe the fool and the bruitiſh perſon periſh, and leave their wealth to others: Their inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.* The Hebrew runneth thus, *Their inwards are their houſes for ever*; as if their houſes were got within them; not only the thoughts, but the very inmoſt thoughts, the moſt retired thoughts, and receſſes of worldlings ſouls are taken up about earthly things. And though they

care

care not whether their names are written in heaven, or no, yet they do all they can to propagate and immortalize their names on earth: And the rich fool was one in ſpirit with theſe the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, as you may ſee in that *Luke* 12. *v.* 16. to *v.* 22. *And he ſpake a parable unto them, ſaying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himſelf,* (the Greek word διελογίζετο is a marvellous proper word for the purpoſe, it ſignifies to talk with a mans ſelf, or to reaſon with a mans ſelf; this fooliſh worldling was much in talking to himſelf, and in reaſoning with himſelf about his goods and barns, &c. as the uſual manner of men is that are of a worldly ſpirit) *ſaying, what ſhall I do, becauſe I have no room where to beſtow my fruits: and he ſaid, this will I do, I will pull down my Barns, and build greater, and there will I beſtow all my fruits and my goods: And I will ſay to my ſoul, Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe,*

eat

eat, drink, and be merry. Among all his worldly thoughts there is not one thought of God, of Chriſt, of grace, of heaven, of holineſſe, of eternity to be found; his thoughts were ſo taken up with his bags, and his barns, and his buildings, and his eaſe, and his belly, that he had no time to think of providing for another world; and therefore God quickly diſpatches him out of this world, and throws him down from the higheſt pinacle of proſperity and worldly glory into the greateſt gulf of wrath and miſery, *v.* 20. and this fooliſh worldling puts me in mind of another, who being offered an Horſe by his fellow, upon condition that he would but ſay the Lords prayer, and think upon nothing but God; which proffer being accepted, he began; *Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name*; But I muſt have the Bridle too, ſaid he: No, nor the Horſe neither, ſaid the other, for thou haſt loſt both already.

When

When worldlings ſhould moſt think of God, and be moſt ſtruck with the dread and majeſty of God, and be moſt afflicted and taken up with the glory of God, yet then their thoughts and hearts will be a gadding and a running after the world, as you may ſee in *Ezekiels* hearers, *Ezek.* 33. 30, 31, 32. and in *Pauls*, *Phil.* 3. 18, 19. When Queen *Mary* was dying, ſhe ſaid, that if they did but open her when ſhe was dead, they ſhould find *Calice* lying at her heart: ah how often doth ſtinking luſts and rotten Towns, and moth-eaten bags, and other trifling vanities lie neer thoſe hearts where God, and Chriſt, and the Spirit, and grace, and Ordinances, and Saints, and heaven ſhould lie: Look as the thoughts of the men of the world do mainly run out after the world, after their earthly portions; ſo the thoughts of thoſe that have God for their portion do mainly run out after God, and they are never ſo well as when

when they are moſt a thinking and a muſing on God. But

Secondly, If God be thy portion, then in all thy ſtraits, trials, troubles, and wants, thou wilt run to thy God, thou wilt fly to the Lord, as to thy onely City of refuge, 1 *Sam.* 30.6. *And* David *was greatly diſtreſſed, for the people ſpake of ſtoning him, becauſe the ſoul of all the people was grieved* (or *bitter*) *every man for his ſons, and for his daughters, but* David *incouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.* When a ſhower of ſtones were coming about *Davids* ears, he runs and ſhelters himſelf under the wings of his God. Though *David* was an exile in an heatheniſh Countrey, though *Ziglag* the place of his habitation was burnt, though he had neither houſe nor home to flee to, though his wives were in his enemies hands, and though his friends and followers were deſperately incenſed, inraged, exaſperated, and provoked againſt him, and took counſel

2.
Pſal.28.1.
Pſal.31.2,3
Pſal.61.2.
Pſa.62.2,6, 7.
Pſa. 92.15.
Pſal.94.22
Iſa. 32.1,2.

counſel together about ſtoning of him, looking upon him as the Author of all their croſſes, loſſes, calamities, and miſeries; yet now he comforts and incourages himſelf in the Lord his God, *Pſal.* 142. 4. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me; no man cared for my ſoul.* But what doth the Pſalmiſt do in this caſe? doth he deſpair, or deſpond? no; doth he caſt away his hope and confidence in God? no; why what doth he do then? why when all outward comforts fail him, he runs to God, as to his laſt refuge, *v.* 5, 6. *I cried unto thee, O Lord, I ſaid thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living: Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low, deliver me from my perſecutors, for they are ſtronger than I.* He doth not run in his ſtraits from God to the Creatures, for that had been to run from the fountain of living waters to broken ciſterns, from the light of the Sun to the light of a farthing can-

Jer. 2. 12, 13
John 6. 68
Iſa. 33. 16.

dle.

dle, and from the Rock of Ages to a leaf driven about with the wind, and from paradiſe into an howling wilderneſſe, &c. but whether doth he run then? why he runs to God, he knew that God was his light, his life, his love, his peace, his joy, his ſtrength, his ſhelter, his ſafety, his ſecurity, his crown, his glory, and therefore he runs to his God; and indeed in times of danger, whether ſhould the child run to ſhelter himſelf, but to his father? and whether ſhould the wife run, but to her husband? and the ſervant, but to his maſter? and the ſouldier, but to his ſtrong hold? and a Chriſtian, but to his God? *Prov.* 18. 10. *The Name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.* Sometimes by the Name of the Lord we are to underſtand God himſelf, but moſt commonly Gods Attributes are called his Name, becauſe by them he is known as a man is by his name; and here by the Name of the Lord we are to underſtand the

power

power of the Lord, for by that God is known, as men are known by their names. Now God himſelf is a ſtrong tower, and the power of God is a ſtrong tower, yea, 'tis a tower as high as heaven, and as ſtrong as ſtrength it ſelf, 'tis a tower ſo deep no Pioneer can undermine it, ſo thick, no Cannon can pierce it, ſo high, no Ladder can ſcale it, ſo ſtrong, that no enemy can aſſault it, or ever be able to ſtand before it, and ſo well furniſhed and provided for all purpoſes and intents, that all the powers of darkneſſe can never diſtreſs it, or in the leaſt ſtraiten it. Now to this impregnable and inexpugnable tower the righteous in all their diſtreſſes and dangers run: All creatures run to their refuges when they are hunted and purſued; and ſo do righteous ſouls to theirs; but what doth the righteous man gain, by running to his ſtrong Tower? why he gaines ſafety; he is ſafe, ſaith the Text; or rather according to the

the Hebrew * שגב *exaltatur*, he is exalted, he is ſet aloft, he is a ſoul out of gunſhot, he is a ſoul out of all hazard and danger, he is ſafe in everlaſting armes, he is ſafe in his ſtrong tower of defence, he can eaſily overlook all hazards, yea, he can look upon the greateſt dangers with an holy neglect. And when the burning fiery furnace was heat ſeven times hotter than at firſt, whither doth *Shadrach, Meſhech*, and *Abednego* run? why they run to God, *Dan.* 3.16,17,18. Shadrach, Meſhech, *and* Abednego *answered, and ſaid to the King*, O Nebuchadnezzar, *we are not careful to anſwer thee in this matter; If it be ſo, our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand*, O *King: But if not, be it known unto thee*, O *King, that we will not ſerve thy gods, nor worſhip the golden image which thou haſt ſet up:* And ſo *Moſes* in that *Pſal.* 90.1. *Lord, thou haſt been our dwelling-place in all generations*; or as the Hebrew hath it, thou haſt

* The Hebrew word is from *Sagab* that ſignifies to exalt, or to ſet aloft

haſt been our refuge place in generation and generation. By this Hebraiſme, generation and generation, the Prophet ſets forth all generations, to ſhew that there hath been no generation wherein God hath not been the refuge of his people: God was a refuge to his people before the Flood, and he hath been a refuge ſince the Flood, & he will be a refuge to his people, whil'ſt he hath a people in the world. All the time that *Moſes* and the people of *Iſrael* were a travelling up and down in that terrible howling wilderneſſe, wherein they were compaſſed about with dreadful dangers on all hands; God was a refuge and a dwelling place unto them. In all their troubles and travels for four hundred years together God was a ſhelter, a refuge, and an houſe of defence unto them; every mans houſe is his ſtrong caſtle, and thither he retreats when dangers come; and thus did the people of God in the Text, when dangers threa-

threatened them, they still run to their God, they still made their retreat to the Holy One of *Israel*. A man that hath God for his portion, when he is at worst can never be houseleſſe nor harbourleſs; as long as God lives he can never want an house, a mansion-house to hide his head in. All the powers on earth and all the powers of hell can never unhouse, nor never unharbour, nor never unshelter that man that hath God for his portion. 'Twas a witty saying of that learned man *Picus Mirandula*, God created the earth for beasts to inhabit, the sea for fishes, the air for fowles, and heaven for Angels and Stars, so that man hath no place to dwell and abide in but God alone. And certainly he that by faith dwells in God, dwells in the best, the noblest, the safest, and the strongest house that ever was dwelt in: And so *Psal.* 91. 1, 2. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the*

Lord, he is my refuge, and my fortresse; my God, in him will I trust: In this whole Psalm the safety of a Saint is set forth to the life; to abide under the shadow of the Almighty, notes the defence and protection of God: Those words, *shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty*, are a Metaphor taken from a bird or an hen that hides her young ones under her wings, and so secures them from the Kite, or any other birds of prey. God never wants a wing to hide his children under; and look, as little chickens run under the wings of the hen when danger is neer, so the people of God do commonly run under the wings of God when danger is neer. And certainly, that Christian may well bid defiance to all dangers, and easily and sweetly sing away all cares and fears, who can by faith shelter himself and lodge himself under the shadow of *Shaddai*.

Look, As the worldling in all his straits, troubles, trials, dangers, and

and wants ſtill runs to his bags, to his earthly portion for ſuccour, for comfort, for ſupport, for reliet, for ſhelter, for protection, *Prov.* 18. 11. *Matt.* 19. 24. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. So a Chriſtian in all his troubles, trials, and diſtreſſes, ſtill runs to his God for ſhelter, comfort, and ſupport, *Pſ.* 31. 1, 2, 3. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my truſt, let me never be aſhamed; deliver me in thy righteouſneſſe: Bow down thine ear to me, deliver me ſpeedily, be thou my ſtrong rock for an houſe of defence to ſave me: For thou art my rock, and my fortreſſe, therefore for thy Names ſake lead me and guide me.* Pſal. 61. 2, 3. *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed lead me to the rock that is higher than I: For thou haſt been a ſhelter for me, and a ſtrong tower from the enemy.* Pſal. 94. 21, 22. *They gather themſelves together againſt the ſoul of the righ-*

I have read of a wretched woldling, who being ſick to death, called for one of his bags of gold, and laid it to his heart, and then cried out, O it will not do, it will not do; and then called for another, and ſtill cried out, Oh, it will not do, it will not do.

righteous, and condemn the innocent blood: But the Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge. Psa. 57.2. *I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me.* Isa. 25.9. *And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoyce in his salvation*; Micah 7. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear.* Thus you see that the Saints in all their straits and trials do still run to God; they know that that God that is their portion is an all-sufficient God, and that he is a Sun and a Shield to them that walk uprightly; and therefore they delight to be still a running under his shadow. A man that hath God for his portion may truly say in his greatest distresses and troubles, Well, though I have no riches to fly to, nor no friends to shelter me, nor no relations to stand by me, nor no visible power

on

on earth to protect me, yet I have a God for my portion that is alwayes willing to supply me, and able to secure me, *Psal.* 18.1,2. *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength* (or as the Hebrew hath it, I wil dearly love the Lord, or I will love him with inmost bowels of affections, as a tender hearted mother loves her deareſt babe with the inmoſt bowels of affections) *The Lord is my rock, and my fortreſſe, and my deliverer, my God, my ſtrength, in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and the horn of my ſalvation, and my high Tower.* In this Verſe you have nine ſeveral expreſſions to diſcover what an all-ſufficient refuge God is to his people in their greateſt diſtreſſes. When a Chriſtian is at worſt, yet he hath bread celeſtial, bread to eat that the world knows not of; the grand policy of a Chriſtian to ſecure himſelf againſt all dangers, is to run to God. But

Thirdly, If God be thy portion, then thou wilt hold faſt thy portion, 3.

tion, and rather part with any thing, than part with thy portion. *Naboth* would not upon any terms part with his inheritance, he would rather let all go, yea, his very life go, then let his inheritance go, his portion go, 1 *Kings* 21.3. *And* Naboth *said to* Ahab, *the Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee*: or as the Hebrew hath it, This be abomination to me from the Lord; that is, the Lord keep me from this as from an abominable thing. To alter or alienate the property of inheritances was expresly forbidden by God in his Law; and therefore *Naboth* looks upon *Ahabs* offer and motion as a detestable and an abominable thing, and resolves to hold fast his inheritance whatever it cost him: so a Christian will hold fast his God whatever comes on it; he will let any thing go rather than let his God go, or his Christ go; *Cant.* 3.4. *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him, and would*

Leyit. 25. 23. Num. 36.7 Ezek. 46. 18.

not

not let him go, until I had brought him into my mothers houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. The Hebrew word that is here rendered *held*, is from *Achaz*, which ſignifies to hold, as a man would hold his poſſeſſion, his inheritance; the word ſignifies to hold with both hands, to hold with all ones might, and with all ones ſtrength; and thus the Spouſe held the Lord Jeſus, ſhe held him with both hands, ſhe held him with all her might, and with all her ſtrength, ſhe held him with a holy violence, with an holy force; ſhe held him as a man would hold his priſoner that had a mind to eſcape, or as a man would hold his ſword or buckler when his life is in danger: ſo *Jacob*, *Gen.* 32. 26. *And he ſaid, let me go, for the day breaketh: and he ſaid, I will not let thee go, except thou bleſſe me.* When *Jacob* was all alone, and in a dark night, and upon one leg, and when his joynts were out of joynt, and he very much over-match't, yet then he holds

The Motto of a Chriſtian, whilſt he is in the wilderneſſe of this world, is, ſelf-diffidence, and Chriſt-dependence, *Cant.* 8. 5.

Hoſ.12.4. holds God faſt, he wreſtles and weeps, and weeps and wreſtles, he tugs and ſweats, and ſweats and tugs, and will not let go his hold till like a Prince he had prevailed with God. *Ruth*, you know, was ſo glued to her mother *Naomi*, that no arguments could prevail with her to leave her mother, ſhe was fully reſolved in this, that whether her mother went ſhe would go, and where her mother lodg'd ſhe would lodge, and that her mothers people ſhould be her people, and her mothers God her God; and that where her mother died, there ſhe would die, and there would ſhe be buried: So a man that hath God for his portion is ſo glued to his God, that nothing can take him off from following of God, and from cleaving to God. When *David* was in his wilderneſſe-condition, yet then his ſoul followed hard after God, then his ſoul ſtuck cloſe to God; *Pſ.* 63. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee, my ſoul thirſteth for thee,*

Ruth.1.14. to the 19.

my

my fleſh longeth for thee in a dry and thirſty land where no water is: Verſ. 8. *my ſoul followeth hard after thee*; or as the words may be read, My ſoul cleaveth after thee. *Davids* enemies did not follow harder after him, than he followed hard after God; the wife in a mans boſome could not cleave ſo cloſe to him, as *Davids* ſoul did cleave cloſe to God, when he was in a wilderneſs eſtate, when he was in an afflicted condition; 'tis nothing to follow God in a paradiſe, but 'tis rare to follow God in a wilderneſſe; 'tis nothing to follow God when the way is ſtrowed with roſe-buds, but 'tis the glory of a Chriſtian to follow God when the way is ſtrowed with thornes and briars; 'tis nothing to follow God in a crowd (or with the crowd) but 'tis the excellency of a Chriſtian to follow God in a wilderneſſe, where few or none follows after him; 'tis nothing to follow God in the midſt of all incouragements, but 'tis wonderful to follow God in the midſt

midſt of all diſcouragements: O the integrity! O the ingenuity! O the ſtrong intention! O the deep affection! O the noble reſolution of that Chriſtian that hangs upon God in a wilderneſſe, and that cleaves to God in a wilderneſſe, and that follows hard after God in a wilderneſſe! Look, as *Shechems* ſoul did cleave to *Dinah*, and as *Jacobs* ſoul did cleave to *Rachel*, and as *Jonathans* ſoul did cleave to *David* in the very face of all hazards, dangers, difficulties, troubles, trials, and diſtreſſes; ſo the very ſoul of a man that hath God for his portion will cleave to God in the very face of all hazards, dangers, difficulties, troubles, trials, and diſtreſſes that he meets withall, *Pſa.* 44. 8. to verſ. 23. 'Tis neither the frowns of men, nor the reproaches of men, nor the ſcorns of men, nor the contempts of men, nor the oppoſitions of men, nor the treacheries of men, nor the combinations of men that will work him to let go his hold of God. A man that

Gen. 34. 3. Chap. 18. 29, 30. 1 Sam. 18. 1, 3.

that hath God for his portion, knows that whil'ſt he holds his God he holds his life, and that whilſt he holds his God he holds his comfort, his crown, his heaven, his all; and therefore he will rather let all go, than let his God go; and ſo much the ſeveral *leave nots* that are ſcattered up and down in the bleſſed Scripture doth clearly evidence, as that in 1 *Kings* 8.57. *The Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers, let him not leave us, nor forſake us*: and that, *Pſal.*27.9. *Hide not thy face far from me, put not thy ſervant away in anger; thou haſt been my help, leave me not, neither forſake me, O God of my ſalvation.* And ſo Pſ.119.121. *I have done judgment and juſtice, leave me not to mine oppreſſours.* And ſo *Pſal.* 141.8. *But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my truſt, leave not my ſoul deſtitute*, or leave not my ſoul naked, as the Hebrew word ſignifies: And ſo in that *Jer.* 14.9. *Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a man aſtonied, as a mighty man that cannot ſave? yet thou*

thou, O Lord, are in the midſt of us, and we are called by thy Name, leave us not. Now in theſe five Scriptures you have five *leave us not's*, and what do they import? certainly nothing leſſe than a marvellous unwillingneſſe in the people of God to part with God, or to let go their hold of God.

I have read of *Cynegirus*, an Athenian Captain, who in the Perſian Wars, purſuing his enemies Ship, which was laden with the rich ſpoils of his Countrey, and ready to ſet ſail, how he firſt held it with his right hand, till that was cut off; and then with his left hand, till that was cut off, and then with his ſtumps till his armes were cut off, and then he held it with his teeth, till his head was cut off: as long as he had any life or ſtrength left in him he would not let go his hold; ſo a man that hath God for his portion will rather die at the foot of God, than he will let go his hold of God;

God, *Job* 13. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*. But

Fourthly, If God be thy portion, then thou livest upon God as upon thy portion. Look, as the men of the world do live upon their earthly portions, so a man that hath God for his portion lives upon his God, as you may plainly see by comparing the Scriptures in the margine together. Look, how the poor man lives upon his labours, the covetous man upon his bags, the ambitious man upon his honours, the voluptuous man upon his pleasures, &c. so doth a Christian live upon his God; in all his duties he lives upon God, and in all his mercies he lives upon God, and in all his wants he lives upon God, and in all his straits and trials he lives upon God, and in all his contentments and enjoyments he still lives upon God; he lives upon God for his justification, *Rom.* 8. 33. *It is God that justifieth*, and he lives upon God for the perfecting

4.

1 Sam. 30. 6 Hab. 3. 17, 18. Psal. 73. 26 Rom. 14. 7, 8. Gal. 2. 20. Phil. 1. 21.

ing of his ſanctification; *Phil.* 1, 6. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt*; and he lives upon God for the maintaining and increaſing of his conſolation, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3, 4, 5. When he is under the frowns of the world, then he lives upon the ſmiles of God; when he is under the hatred of the world, then he lives upon the loves of God; and when he is under the reproaches of the world, then he lives upon his credit with God; when he is under the threatnings of the world, then he lives upon the protection of God; and when he is under the deſigns and plottings of the world, then he lives upon the wiſdome and counſel of God; when he is under the ſlightings and neglects of the world, then he lives upon the care of God; and when he is under the croſſes and loſſes of the world, then he lives upon the fulneſſe and goodneſſe of God, &c. *Alexander* told his ſouldiers,

I wake that ye may ſleep; moſt ſure I am, that he that is the Saints portion never ſlumbers nor ſleeps: God is alwayes watchful and wakeful to do his people good; he never wants skill or will to help them, he never wants a purſe, a hand, or a heart to ſupply them, &c. Pſa. 121. 3, 4

O Sirs, Every man ſingles out ſomething to live upon; ſome ſingle out one thing, ſome another; ſaith the wife, I muſt live upon my husband; ſayes the child, I muſt live upon my father; ſayes the ſervant, I muſt live upon my maſter; ſayes the old, we muſt live upon the labours of the young; ſayes the poor, we muſt live upon the charity of the rich; and why then ſhall not a Chriſtian live upon his God? A Chriſtian that hath God for his portion may ſay when he is at worſt, Well, though I have not this, nor that, nor the other outward comfort to live upon, yet I have the power of a God to live on, and I have the

providence of a God to live on, and I have the promiſe of a God to live on, and I have the oath of a God to live on, and I have the love of a God to live on, and I have the bounty of a God to live on, and I have the fulneſſe of a God to live on, and I have the care of a God to live on; and what can I deſire more? *John* of *Alexandria*, ſirnam'd the *Almoner*, did uſe yearly to make even his Revenues, and when he had diſtributed all to the poor, he thanked God that he had now nothing left him to live upon but his Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt: When all is gone, yet a Chriſtian hath his God to live upon as his portion, and that is enough to anſwer to all other things, and to make up the want of all other things. Look, as he hath nothing that hath not God for his portion, ſo he wants nothing that hath God for his portion. 'Twas a weighty ſaying of one, The ſpiritual good of a man conſiſts in this, that a man hath friend-

Pſal. 23.

Surius de vitis. SS.

Cajetan.

friendship with God, and consequently that he lives for him, to him, with him, in him; that he lives for him by consent, to him by conversation, with him by cohabitation, and in him by contentation. Old godly *Similes* said, that he had been in the world sixty years, but had lived but seven, counting his life not from his first birth, but from his new birth. A man lives no longer than he lives upon God as his portion: when a man begins to live upon God as his portion, then he begins to live indeed, and not till then. But

Fifthly, If God be thy portion, then he carries thy heart from all other things; the portion always carries the heart with it, *Matth.6. 20,21. But lay up for your selves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where theeves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also.* Psal. 63.1. *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee*, (or, I will diligently seek thee, as Merchants

5. Psa.42.1,2

Bernard well observes that a wise mans heart is with the Lord.

do precious ſtones that are of greateſt value) *my ſoul thirſteth for thee*: (he doth not ſay, my ſoul thirſteth for water, but my ſoul thirſteth for thee; nor he doth not ſay, my ſoul thirſteth for the blood of my enemies, but my ſoul thirſteth for thee; nor he doth not ſay, my ſoul thirſteth for deliverance out of this dry and barren wilderneſſe, but my ſoul thirſteth for thee in a dry and thirſty land, where no water is; nor he doth not ſay, my ſoul thirſteth for a Crown, a Kingdome, but my ſoul thirſteth for thee) *my fleſh longeth for thee*: Theſe words are a notable Metaphor taken from women with child, to note his earneſt, ardent, and ſtrong affections towards God. And ſo *Pſal.* 84. 2. *My heart and my fleſh crieth out for the living God.* The word that is here rendered *crieth*, is from *Ranan* that ſignifies to ſhout ſhrill, or cry out, as ſouldiers do at the beginning of a battel, when they cry out, Fall on, Fall on, Fall on, or when they cry

out

out after a victory, Victory, Victory, Victory; the Hebrew word notes a strong cry, or to cry as a child cries when 'tis sadly hungry, for now every whit of the childe cries, hands cry, and face cries, and feet cries; and so *Psal.* 119. 21. *My soul breaketh for the longings it hath unto thy judgments at all times.* Look, as the stone will still be rowling towards its center, its place, though it break it self into a thousand pieces; so a soul that hath God for his portion cannot rest till he comes to God, till he comes to his center. 'Tis very observable, that when the God of glory appeared to *Abraham*, he made nothing of leaving his fathers house, his kindred, and his Countrey; a glimpse of that glory works him to give up all easily, readily, and quietly. A man that can look upon the God of glory to be his portion, he cannot but look upon the greatest, the neerest, and the dearest enjoyments of the world, as nothing; he cannot but

Act. 7. 1, 2, 3 4, 5. Gen. 12. 1.

look upon honour as a bubble, and worldly pomp as a fancy, and great men as a lye, and poor men as vanity; he cannot but look upon his neereſt and his deareſt relations, his higheſt and his nobleſt friends, his choiceſt and his ſweeteſt comforts, but as a dream and a ſhadow that ſoon vaniſheth away.

'Tis obſervable in the Courts of Kings and Princes, that children and the ruder ſort of people are much taken with pictures and rich ſhows, and feed their fancies with the ſight of rich hangings and fine gay things; whenas ſuch as are great favourites at Court paſſe by all thoſe things as things that are below them, and as things that are not worthy of their notice, who have buſineſſe with the King, and who have the eye, the ear, the hand, and the heart of the King to take pleaſure and delight in: ſo moſt men admire the poor low things of the world, and are much taken with them as things that have

have a great deal of worth and excellency in them; but a man that hath God for his portion, the King of Kings for his portion, and all that he hath, he passeth by all the gay and gallant things of the world, as things below him, as things not worthy of him; his business is with his God, and his thoughts, and heart, and affections are taken up with his God.

Naturalists tell us, that the loadstone will not draw in the presence of the diamond; O Sirs, whil'st a man can eye God as his portion, all the pride, pomp, bravery, glory, and gallantry in the world will never be able to draw him from God. It is reported, that when the tyrant *Tragine* commanded *Ignatius* to be ript up and unbowelled, they found Jesus Christ written upon his heart in characters of gold; here was an heart worth gold indeed, Christ carried away his heart from all other things: So if God be thy portion, he will certainly

Heb. 11.24, 25,26,27, 35.

tainly carry thy heart away from all earthly things: Look, as earthly portions carry away worldly hearts from God; ſo when God once comes to be a mans portion, he carries his heart away from the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil. All the world cannot keep a mans intereſt and his heart aſunder: If a man make ſin his intereſt, all the world cannot keep ſinne and his heart aſunder; if a man make the world his intereſt, all the power on earth cannot keep the world and his heart aſunder: And ſo if a man make God his intereſt, all the world cannot keep God and his heart aſunder; no ſword, no priſon, no racks, no flames can keep a mans intereſt and his heart aſunder; a mans heart will be working towards his intereſt, even through the very fire, as you may ſee in the three Children, *Dan.* 3. 17,18. Look as the Needles point in the Seamans Compaſſe never ſtands ſtill, but quivers and ſhakes till it come right againſt the North Pole,

Ezek. 33. 31,32.
Luk. 12. 16. to the 21.
Heb. 11.

Pole; and as the Wise-men of the East never stood still, till they were right against the Starre which appeared to them; and as the Star it self never stood still till it came right against that other Star, which shined more brightly in the Manger than the Sun did in the Firmament; and as *Noahs* Dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot all the while she was fluttering over the Flood, till she returned to the Ark with an Olive branch in her mouth; so the heart of a Christian that hath God for his portion, can never rest, can never be at quiet, but in God. But

Sixthly, If God be thy portion, then thou wilt own thy God, and stand up couragiously and resolutely for thy God. Every man will owne his portion, and stand up stoutly and resolutely for his portion; and so will every Christian do for his God, *Psal.* 119. 46. *I will speak of thy testimonies before Kings, and will not be ashamed.* *David* was re-

6. Histories abound with instances of this nature

A man of no reſolution, or of a weak reſolution, will be won with a nut, and loſt with an apple; but a man of a noble reſolution will own God in the face of the greateſt majeſty on earth.

reſolved upon a noble & reſolute owning of God and his teſtimonies before the greateſt and the higheſt of men; and this he would do and not bluſh, this he would do and not be aſhamed, this he would do and not be daunted: It was neither the majeſty or authority of Princes, 'twas neither the power or dread of Princes that could hinder *David* from giving in his teſtimony on Gods ſide, or on Truths ſide: *Joſh.* 24. 18. *We will ſerve the Lord, for he is our God*: ver. 21, 22. *And the people ſaid unto* Joſhua, *nay, but we will ſerve the Lord; and* Joſhua *ſaid unto the people, ye are witneſſes againſt your ſelves, that ye have choſen you the Lord to ſerve him: & they ſaid, we are witneſſes.* Ver. 24. *And the people ſaid unto* Joſhua, *The Lord our God will we ſerve, and his voice will we obey.* They had choſen God to be their God (as God had choſen them to be his peculiar people above all the Nations of the earth) and therefore notwithſtanding all that *Joſhua* had ob-

objected, they were fully reſolved to own the Lord, and to cleave to the Lord, and to obey the Lord, and wholly to devote themſelves to the ſervice of the Lord: having taken the Lord to be their God, they were firmly reſolved to own the Lord really, and to own him fully, and to own him primarily, and to own him only, and to own him everlaſtingly. And ſo *Deut.* 26. 17. *Thou haſt avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his wayes, and to keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, and his Judgments, and to hearken unto his voice.* They had avouched God to be their God, and therefore they were reſolved upon all thoſe holy wayes and means whereby they might evidence to the world their owning of God to be their God. And ſo in that 2 *Chron.* 30. 8. *They yield themſelves unto the Lord*, or as the Hebrew hath it, They give the hand unto the Lord: You know when men make Covenants or Agreements to own one another, or

or to ſtand by one another, they commonly ſtrike hands, or take one another by the hand: Certainly all thoſe that have the Lord for their portion, have given their hands to the Lord, that they will own him, and ſtand by him, and cleave to him, as *Jonathan* did to *David*, or as *Ruth* did to *Naomi*. How ſtoutly and couragiouſly did the three Children own the Lord, and ſtand by the Lord in the face of the fiery Furnace? and *Daniel* will upon choice be rather caſt into the Den of Lions, then that the honour of God ſhould in the leaſt be clouded, or his glory darkned by any neglects or omiſſions of his. And ſo did all thoſe Worthies, of whom this world was not worthy: O how did they own God, and ſtand up for God, notwithſtanding the edge of the ſword, the violence of fire, the cruel mockings and ſcourgings, the bonds and impriſonments, the ſtoning and ſawing aſunder, the temptings, and wandrings about in Sheep-

Dan. 3. 17. 18.

Ch. 6.

Hab. 11. 34. — ult.

Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, and all other trials and torments that did attend them. *Baſil* affirms that the primitive Chriſtians did ſo couragiouſly and reſolutely own God, and ſtand up for God in the face of the moſt dreadful ſufferings, that many of the Heathens ſeeing their heroick zeal, courage, magnanimity, and conſtancy, turned Chriſtians. *Domitian* raiſed the ſecond perſecution againſt the Chriſtians, becauſe they would not give the title of Lord to any but Chriſt, nor worſhip any but God alone. Among the many thouſand inſtances that might be given, let me onely give you a few of a later date, whereby you may ſee how couragiouſly and reſolutely the Saints have ſtood up for God, and owned God in the face of the greateſt dangers that hath attended them.

Luther owned God, and ſtood up reſolutely for God againſt the world: And when the Emperour ſent *Acts & Mon.* 776.

sent for him to *Wormes*, and his friends dissuaded him from going, as sometimes *Pauls* did him; Go, (said he) I will surely go (since I am sent for) in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ; yea, though I knew that there were as many Devils in *Wormes* to resist me, as there be tiles to cover the houses, yet I would go: and when he and his associates were threatened with many dangers from opposers on all hands, he lets fall this heroick and magnanimous speech, Come, let us sing the six and fortieth Psalm, and then let them do their worst. And indeed 'twas a brave courageous speech of the same Author, who when one demanded, where he would be, when the Emperour should with all his forces fall upon the Elector of *Saxony*, (who was the chief Protector of the Protestants) answered, *Aut in cœlo, aut sub cœlo*, either in heaven, or under heaven.

William Flower (the Martyr) said, that the Heavens should as soon fall,

fall, as he would forſake his profeſſion, or budge in the leaſt degree from it.

Apollonius (as *Philoſtratus* reports) being asked, if he did not tremble at the ſight of the tyrant, made this anſwer, God which hath given him a terrible countenance, hath given alſo unto me an undaunted heart.

When the perſecutors by their dreadful threatnings did labour to terrifie one of the Martyrs, he replied, that there was nothing of things viſible, nor nothing of things inviſible that he was afraid of: I will (ſaith he) ſtand to my profeſſion of the Name of Chriſt, and contend earneſtly for the faith once delivered to the Saints.

When Biſhop *Gardiner* asked *Rowland Tailor*, if he did not know him, &c. he anſwered, yea, I know you, and all your greatneſſe, yet you are but a mortal man: and if I ſhould be afraid of your Lordly looks, why fear you not God, the Lord of us all?

The

The Executioner kindling the fire behind *Jerome* of *Prague*, he bad him kindle it before his face, for (said he) if I had been afraid of it, I had not come to this place, having had so many opportunities offered me to escape it; and at the giving up of the ghost, he said, This soul of mine in flames of fire, O Christ, I offer thee.

The German Knight in his Apologetical Letter for *Luther* against the Pontifical Clergy, saith, I will go through what I have undertaken against you, and will stir up men to seek their freedome; I neither care nor fear what may befall me, being prepared for either event, either to ruine you, to the great benefit of my Countrey, or else to fall with a good conscience.

When *Dionysius* was given up to the Executioner to be beheaded, he remained resolute, courageous, and constant, saying, Come life, come death, I will worship none but the God of heaven and earth.

Thus

Thus you see (by these instances) that men that have God for their portion will couragiously owne God, and bravely and resolutely stand up for God, what ever comes on it.

The blood that hath been shed in most Nations under heaven doth clearly evidence this, that men will own their earthly portions, and that they will stand up stoutly, resolutely, and couragiously in the defence of them; and so certainly will all those own God, and stand up in the defence of God, his glory, and truth, who have God for their portion. Take a true bred Christian, when he is himself, take a Christian in his ordinary course, and he cannot but own his God, and stand up stoutly and couragiously for his God in the face of all difficulties and dangers. But

Seventhly, If God be thy portion, then thou wilt look upon all things below thy God, as poor, low, mean, and contemptible things; 7. Ps. 73. 24, 25

things: a worldly man looks upon all things below his earthly portion as contemptible; and ſo doth a Chriſtian look upon all things below his God, as contemptible; *Phil.* 3.7,8. *But what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſſe for Chriſt: Yea, doubtleſſe, and I count all things but loſſe for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus, my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſſe of all things, and do count them but dung,* (the Greek word σκύβαλα, properly ſignifies ſuch ſordid, courſe and contemptible things which are either caſt forth by dogs, or caſt before dogs) *that I may win Chriſt.* And 'tis very obſervable, that after this great Apoſtle had been in the third heaven, and had been bleſt with a glorious ſight of God, he look't upon the world as a poor, mean, low, contemptible thing; *Gal.* 6.14. *God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* Paul ſcorned, deſpiſed, and rejected the world,

Dogs dung ſome interpret the word.

2 Cor. 12.1, 2,3.

world, and the world scorned, despised, and rejected him; *Paul* cast off the world, and the world cast off him; he disregarded the world, and the world disregarded him; he was dead to the world, and the world was dead to him; the world and *Paul* were well agreed; the world car'd not a pin for *Paul*, and *Paul* cared not a straw for the world. And so when *Moses* had seen him that was invisible, when he had taken a full prospect of that other world, and when he had beheld God as his portion, Oh how doth he slight, scorn, and trample upon all the honours, preferments, profits, pleasures, delights, and contentments of Egypt, as things below him, and as things that in no respects were worthy of him! It is a Rabbinical conceit, that *Moses* being a child had *Pharaohs* Crown given him to play withall, and he made no better than a Foot-ball of it, and cast it down to the ground, and kick't it about, as if it were a sign

Heb. 11.24. to 27.

Joh[illegible]tavit. Florileg. Rabbinicum.

of his future vilifying and contemning of temporal things. I ſhall not much trouble my head about what *Moſes* did when he was a child; but of this I am ſure, having the word of a God for it, *That when he was come to years,* (or as the Greek hath it, μέγας γενόμενος, being grown big, or being grown a great one, and ſo ſufficiently underſtood himſelf, and knew very well what he did) he did little leſs than make a Foot-ball of *Pharaohs* Crown, witneſſe his refuſing with an holy ſcorn and diſdain to be called the ſon of *Pharaohs* daughter, and ſo to ſucceed *Pharaoh* in the Throne. And ſo in that *Rev.* 12. 1, 2. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve Stars.* The Church here is compared to a woman for her weakneſſe, fruitfulneſſe, and lovingneſſe; and it is obſervable, that ſhe is clothed with the Sun, that is, with Chriſts own comli-

Heb. 11. 24.

Some conclude he was forty years old now from that, Acts 7. 23.

neſſe

nesse and righteousnesse, which resembles the Sun in its several properties and effects, not now to be insisted on. Now this woman, the Church, is said to have the Moon under her feet: by the Moon we are to understand all temporary and transitory things; now the Church treads upon all these things as trash and trumpery that were much below her, and despised by her. Look, as the great men of the world do commonly look upon all portions that are below their own with an eye of scorn, disdain, and contempt, as *Haman* did, and as those bold daring sinners did, *Psal.* 73. So do those that have God for their portion look upon all things below their God with an eye of scorn and disdain. I have read of *Lazarus*, that after his resurrection from the dead he was never seen to laugh, his thoughts, his heart, his affections were so fixt upon God, and so taken up with God, with his portion, that he was as a dead man

Esth. 5. 9—-ult. Psa. 73. 4—13.

to all the gay and gallant things of the world, he ſaw nothing in them worthy of a ſmile.

And ſo when once *Galiacius* that famous Italian Marqueſſe came to underſtand that God was his portion, in the face of the higheſt offers imaginable, of honour, favour, profit, and preferment, he cried out, Curſed be he that prefers all the glory of the world to one dayes communion with God.

Euſtath. in Homer. The old Grecians who had altogether fed on Acorns before, when bread came in among them they made no reckoning of their maſt, but reſerved it only for their Swine. And the *Lacedemonians* *Seneca de Benefic.* deſpiſed their iron and leathern money, when gold and ſilver came in uſe among them; ſo when a man comes once to experience God to be his portion, ah, at what a low rate will he value the ſwelling honours, the deceitful riches, John 4.14. and the vaniſhing pleaſures of this beggarly world. Chriſtians are Matth. 24. 28. compared to Eagles; now the

Eagle

Eagle is a Kingly, a Princely bird, 'tis a bird of a ſharp piercing ſight, and of a ſwift and lofty flight, it flies high, and ſets light by things below (except it be when neceſſity compells her) and ſo 'tis with thoſe that have God for their portion, they fly high, and they live high in God, and therefore they cannot but ſet light by the toyes and trifles of the world. But

Eighthly, If God be thy portion, then thy God is moſt precious to thee, then thou ſetteſt the higheſt price and value imaginable upon thy God; every man ſets the higheſt price upon his portion; though a man may ſet a good price upon his delightful gardens, his pleaſant walks, his delicate fiſh-ponds, his fruitful trees, his ſweet flowers, &c. yet 'tis no price to that which he ſets upon his portion. Well, ſayes a man, though here be an hundred things to delight my eye, and to pleaſe my fancy, and to ſatiate my appetite, 8.

yet I infinitely value my portion above them all: And who but a fool in *Folio* will value a thouſand a year above a few accommodations that are onely for pleaſure and delight: So though a Chriſtian may ſet a conſiderable value upon all his outward comforts and contentments, yet 'tis no value to that he ſets upon his God, upon his portion; this and that is precious to me, ſaith a Chriſtian, but my God is infinitely more precious than all. A Chriſtian ſets up God above his goods; *Heb.* 10. 34. and above his luſts; *Gal.* 5. 24. and above his relations; 1 *Sam.* 30. 1--7. yea, and above his very life; *Rev.* 12. 11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death:* Pſa. 63. 3. *Thy loving kindneſſe is better than life:* the Hebrew is *Chaiim, lives*; put many lives together, yet there is more excellency and glory in the leaſt beam, in the leaſt diſcovery of divine love, than there is in them

Pſa. 23. 24, 25. Pſa. 4. 6, 7.

them all: A man may be weary of life, but never of divine love; Histories tell us of many that have been weary of their lives, but no Histories can furnish us with an instance of any one that was ever weary of divine love. Look, as the people prized *David* above themselves, saying, *Thou art worth ten thousand of us*; so they that have indeed God for their portion, O how do they prize God above themselves, and above every thing below themselves! and doubtlesse they that in a course do not lift up God above all, they have no interest in God at all. Whatever a man eyes as his greatest interest, that he sets up above all, and before all other things in the world. Now if a man eyes God as his greatest interest, he cannot but set God atop of all. I have not faith enough to believe, that ever such did truly love God, who love any thing more than God, or who set up any thing above God. Look, as *Darius* set up *Daniel* over all, and

2 Sam. 18. 3.

Luk. 14. 26

as

as *Pharaoh* set up *Joseph* above all, so a man that hath God for his portion, he sets up God over all, and he sets up God above all. One set so high a price upon Christ, that he hath long since told us, that he would willingly goe thorow hell to Christ; and, saith another, I had rather be in my chimny-corner with Christ, than in heaven without him: When one of the Martyrs was offered riches and honours if he would recant, he made this excellent answer, Do but offer me somewhat that is better than my Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall see what I will say to you. And I have read of another that set so high a price upon the Lord Jesus, that whensoever he did but mention the name of Jesus, his eyes dropt tears; were every Star in the Firmament a Sun, yet a man that hath God for his portion would prize him above them all.

Austin

Bernard

Johannes Mollius.

Do you ask me, where be my Jewels? my Jewels are my husband,

Plutarch in Phocion.

band, said *Phocions* wife; do you ask me, where be my ornaments? my ornaments are my two sonnes brought up in vertue and learning, said the mother of the *Gracchi*: do you ask me, where be my treasures? my treasures are my friends, said *Constantius*, the father of *Constantine*; So if you ask a Christian that hath God for his portion, where his jewels, his ornaments, his treasures, his comforts, and the delights of his soul are, he will answer you, that they are all in God, he will tell you that God is his portion, and that God is his great all, and that he enjoys all in God, and God in all; and therefore he cannot but prize God above all. But to prevent mistakes in this weighty case, let me give you a few brief hints; As

First, If God be truly precious to thee, then all of God is precious to thee, his Name is precious to thee, his Honour is precious to thee, his Ordinances are precious to thee, 1.

thee, his Sabbaths are precious to thee, his promiſes are precious to thee, his precepts are precious to thee, his threatnings are precious to thee, his rebukes are precious to thee, his people are precious to thee, and all his concernments are precious to thee. Look, as every ſparkling ſtone that is ſet round about a rich Diamond is precious in the eyes of the Jeweller, ſo is every ſparkling excellency in God precious in his eyes that ſets an high value upon God. Look, as all of the new-born babe is precious in the eyes of the tender mother, as head, face, hands, arms, body, feet, &c. ſo all of God is very precious in his eyes that hath any tender regard of God; and look, as all of an husband is precious in the eyes of a loving wife, *viz.* his perſon, name, credit, honour, eſtate, liberty, life, &c. ſo all of God is very precious in his eyes that loves God with a real love, with a ſuperlative love. But

It was an harlot that would have the child divided. 1 Kings 3. 25,26.

Se-

Secondly, If God be moſt precious to thee, then all the diſhonours that are done to God, his truth, his worſhip, his wayes, his ordinances, his inſtitutions, his government, his people, are moſt grievous and burthenſome to thee. *The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. I beheld the tranſgreſſours, and was grieved, becauſe they kept not thy word*; the word that is here tranſlated *grieved* is from *Katat*, that ſignifies to loath, abhor, and contend; I beheld the tranſgreſſours, and I loathed them; I beheld the tranſgreſſours, and I abhorred them; I beheld the tranſgreſſours, and I contended with them; but not ſo much becauſe they were mine enemies, as becauſe they were thine. Tis juſt between God and all thoſe that have a precious eſteem of him, as 'tis between two Luteſtrings that are tuned one to another; no ſooner one is ſtruck, but the other trembles. A Saint cannot ſee God ſtruck, but his heart will

2.

Pſal. 69. 9. Pſ. 119. 158.

Jer. 9. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Mr. *Perkins* Government of the Tongue.

will tremble. A Father lying upon his death-bed, called three children to him, which he kept, and told them that one onely of them was his natural son, and that the other two were onely brought up by him, therefore unto him onely he gave all his goods; but which of those three was his own son, he would not in any wise declare: when he was dead, every one pleaded his birth-right, and the matter being brought to trial, the Judge for the making (if possible) a true discovery, took this course; He caused the dead Corps of the Father to be set up against a tree, and commanded the three sons to take bows and arrowes, to shoot at their Father, to see who could come neerest to his heart; the first and second did shoot and hit him, but the third was very much angry, and displeased with them both, and through the natural affection of a child to a father, threw away his bow and arrow, and would not shoot at all; this being

being done, the Judge gave this sentence, *viz.* That the two first that shot (at their supposed fathers heart) were no sons, but that the third son that would not shoot at all, and that was very much displeased with those that did shoot was the true son, and that he should have the goods. O Sirs, every bitter word is an arrow shot at the heart of God, and every bloody oath is an arrow shot at the heart of God, and every heavy curse is an arrow shot at the heart of God, and every superstitious custome is an arrow shot at the heart of God, and every snare that is laid for the righteous is an arrow shot at the heart of God, and every yoke that is laid upon the people of God is an arrow shot at the heart of God, and every affront that by debauched persons is given to God, is an arrow shot at the heart of God, &c. And what true bred sons, what ingenious sons can see such arrows every hour in the day shot at the heart of God (and

(and hear of ſuch arrows that are ſhot a thouſand, thouſand times in a day at the heart of God) and not grieve and mourn, and not be afflicted, troubled, diſpleaſed, and aſtoniſhed, to ſee men and to hear of men that were once made in the Image of God to be turned into ſuch incarnate Devils, as thus to deal with God, yea, with ſuch a God as can ſpeak them into hell at his pleaſure. But

Thirdly, If God be moſt precious to you, then you will part with any thing for God, then you will let go any thing that you may hold your God, and enjoy your God, then your *Iſaac* ſhall be made a ſacrifice, if God will have it ſo; and your *Benjamin* ſhall be ſent into *Egypt*, if God will have it ſo; then your *Jonah* ſhall be caſt over-board, if God will have it ſo, then out goes the right eye, and off goes the right hand upon a divine command; then you will never cry out, O this mercy is too

Phil. 3. 7, 8. Mat. 13. 46.

Gen. 22. Chap. 43.

Jonah 1.

neer to me to part with for God, and that comfort is too dear to me to part with for God, &c. O no, but then you will say, as the King of *Sodome* said to *Abraham*, *Give me the persons, and take the goods to thy self*: So you will say, Give us God, O give us God, and let who will take the goods, let who will take the honours, and the profits, and the pleasures of the world; 'tis enough that *Joseph* is alive, 'tis enough if we may but enjoy our God. A Prince will part with any thing rather than he will part with his Crown-Jewels; and so will a Christian rather part with any thing, than (upon choice to part) with his God, whom he values above all the Crown-Jewels in the world. But Gen. 14. 21.

Fourthly, If God be most precious to thee, then thou canst never have enough of God, thou canst never have enough of communion with God, thou canst never have enough of the presence of God, 4.

Psa. 27.4. Psal.84. Psa.42.1,2. Psal.63.1, 2,3. Cant.8.14. Rev.22.20

thou canst never have enough of the Spirit of God, thou canst never have enough of the discoveries of God, thou canst never have enough of the assistance of God, thou canst never have enough of the secret influences and incomes of God, thou canst never have enough of the comforts and strong consolations of God, &c. The grave, the barren womb, the Mammonist, the Pope, the Turk, the Devil and hell will be as soon satisfied, as thou canst be satisfied without clearer, further, and fuller enjoyments of God. *No man* (saith God to *Moses*) *can see my face, and live*; upon which words *Austin* makes this short, but sweet reply, Then Lord let me die, that I may see thy face. 'Tis impossible that ever a mans heart should rest satisfied, till he comes to a full and perfect enjoyment of that which he hath set up as his grand interest, as his great all. But

Exo.33.20

5. Fifthly and lastly, If God be most

moſt precious to thee, then thou wilt give up thy ſelf wholly to God, without any reſervation. Whatever a man ſets up as his great intereſt, to that he devotes himſelf, to the ſervice of that he wholly gives up himſelf: So when a man eyes God as his moſt precious intereſt, and ſets up God, as his moſt precious intereſt, he cannot but devote himſelf wholly to God, he cannot but give up himſelf wholly to God; *Pſal.* 119.94. *I am thine, ſave me,* I am not my owne, nor ſinnes, nor Satans, nor the worlds, nor friends, nor relations, but *I am thine*; I am really thine, I am wholly thine, I am onely thine, I am alwayes thine, I am thine to be ſanctified, and I am thine to be ſaved, I am thine to be commanded, and I am thine to be ruled; Lord, I am thine own, and therefore do with thine own as thou pleaſeſt, and diſpoſe of thine own as thou pleaſeſt, I am at thy foot, willing in ſome meaſure to be any thing or nothing, as ſhall

Cant. 2.16. Acts 7.23, 4. Acts 13.22. Luke 1.5,6, 7.

ſeem beſt in thine own eyes. When the keys of the whole houſe, and of every room in the houſe are given up to the King to be at his diſpoſe, at his ſervice, then he is entertained as a King, and honoured as a King, and valued and prized as a King: And ſo when all the keyes of the ſoul, and every room in the ſoul, and every faculty of the ſoul are given up to God to be at his diſpoſe, at his ſervice, then God is entertained as a God, and honoured as a God, and valued and prized as a God, but not till then. And by theſe five hints (if you will not put a cheat upon your own ſouls) you may know whether God ſits in the uppermoſt room of your hearts, or no; and whether God be ſet up in your hearts above all, and whether he be indeed your great all, or your all in all. But

9. Ninthly, If God be thy portion, then there is no loſſe in all the world that lies ſo hard and ſo heavy

heavy upon thee, as the loſſe of thy God; there is no loſſe under heaven that doth ſo affect and afflict a man that hath God for his portion, as the loſſe of his God. *David* met with many a loſs, but no loſs made ſo ſad and ſo great a breach upon his ſpirit, as the loſſe of the face of God, the loſſe of the favour of God, *Pſal.* 30. 6, 7. *In my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved; Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong; thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled:* The Hebrew word *Bahal* ſignifies, to be greatly troubled, to be ſorely terrified, as you may ſee in that 1 *Sam.* 28. 21. *And the woman came unto Saul, and ſaw that he was ſore troubled:* Here is the ſame Hebrew word *Bahal.* *Saul* was ſo terrified, affrighted, and diſ-animated with that dreadful news that the Devil in *Samuels* likeneſſe told him, that

And ſo this Hebrew word *Bahal* you have again in that *Dan.* 5. 9. to expreſſe the greatneſſe of *Belſhazzars* trouble and terrour, when he ſaw the hand-writing upon the wall, & when none of his wiſe men could read the writing, &c.

his very vital ſpirits ſo failed him, that he fell into a fainting deadly ſwoon: And it was even ſo with *David* upon Gods hiding of his face; *David* was like a withered flower that had loſt all its ſap, life, and vigour, when God had wrapt up himſelf in a cloud. The life of ſome creatures lieth in the light and warmth of the Sun; and ſo doth the life of the Saints lie in the light and warmth of Gods countenance: And as in an Eclipſe of the Sun there is a drooping in the whole frame of Nature; ſo when God hides his face, gracious ſouls cannot but droop and languiſh, & bow down themſelves before him. Many inſenſible creatures (ſome by opening and ſhutting, as Marigolds and Tulips, others by bowing and inclining the head, as the Solſequy and Mallow-flowers) are ſo ſenſible of the preſence and abſence of the Sun, that there ſeems to be ſuch a ſimpathy between the Sun and them, that if the Sun be gone or clou-

clouded, they wrap up themſelves, or hang down their heads, as being unwilling to be ſeen by any eye but his that fills them; and juſt thus it was with *David*, when God had hid his face in a cloud. And it is very obſervable, that *Job* did bear up very ſweetly, bravely, patiently, and nobly under all his great loſſes of children, eſtate, &c. but when the arrows of the Almighty were got within him, then he complains, that his grief was heavier than the ſands of the ſea: and when the face of God was hidden from him, how ſadly doth he lament and bewail the withdrawings of God; *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him.* You know there is no pain more grievous and tormenting, than that of breaking the bones: Now *David* again and again pitches upon this, to hint unto you that dreadful

Job. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Ch. 23. 8, 9.

Pſal.38.8. Pſa.51.8.

ſmart and pain that his ſoul was under, when he had loſt his communion with God, and when his God was withdrawn from him, and had hid his face from him. And ſo the Church ſadly laments the loſſe of her beloved in that *Solomons ſong* 5. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone; my ſoul failed when he ſpake*; or *he was gone, he was gone.* Now this paſſionate duplication ſpeaks out her very great grief and trouble: Like a ſad widdow ſhe ſits down and wrings her hands, and cries out, *he is gone, he is gone. My ſoul failed me*, or as the Hebrew hath it, *Naphſhi Faſa, My ſoul went out of me*, I was even as an aſtoniſhed creature, I was even as a dead creature, to note how greatly and how deeply ſhe was troubled and perplexed upon the account of his withdrawing from her. O the fear, the terrour the horrour, the dread, the grief, the ſorrow that fell upon the Spouſes heart, when her beloved had turn-

ed

ed his back upon her. And so it was with *Mary*, *John* 20.11,12,13. *But* Mary *stood without at the Sepulchre weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the Sepulchre, and seeth two Angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain: and they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? she saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* Of all losses *Mary* was least able to bear the loss of her Lord, that losse was so great, and so heavy a losse, that she was not able to stand under it with dry eyes: *Mary*'s mourning for the losse of her Lord was like that of *Hadadrimmon* in the Valley of *Megiddon*. There is no loss that comes so neer to a Christians heart, as the losse of his Lord: A Christian can a thousand times better bear the losse of his name (which next to his soul and his grace is the best Jewel that he hath in all the world) the losse of his estate, the losse

Zech. 12. 11.

loſſe of his liberty, the loſſe of his neereſt and deareſt relations, yea, the very loſſe of his life, than he can bear the loſſe of his God.

You ſee how ſadly *Micah* takes on for the loſſe of his wooden gods, in that *Judg.* 18. 23, 24. *And they cried unto the children of* Dan, *and they turned their faces, and ſaid unto* Micah, *what aileth thee, that thou comeſt with ſuch a company? And he ſaid, ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the Prieſt and ye are gone away, and what have I more? and what is this that ye ſay unto me, what aileth thee?* Now if *Micah* was ſo affected and afflicted upon the loſs of his Idol gods, his wooden gods, what cauſe then have Chriſtians to be deeply affected and afflicted, when they come to loſe their God, which is the true God, the living God, the onely God, and the God of Gods. You know, that when *Sampſons* locks were cut off, his ſtrength was gone; and therefore though he thought to go out, and do

Judg. 16. 19,20,21.

do as great things as he had formerly done, yet he found by woful experience that he could not; for now he was become as another man: and it is juſt ſo with the choiceſt Saints, when their God is gone, their locks are cut, and their ſtrength is gone, their doing ſtrength, and their ſuffering ſtrength, & their bearing ſtrength, and their wreſtling ſtrength, and their prevailing ſtrength, &c. is gone, when their God is gone; yea, when God goes, all goes: when the King removes, all his train followes; when God goes, comforts go; when God goes, joyes go; when God goes, peace goes; when God goes, proſperity goes; when God goes, friends go; when God goes, all content and ſatisfaction goes; and therefore it is no wonder to ſee a Chriſtian better bear any loſſe than the loſſe of his God, for in loſing of him he loſes all at a clap. A Chriſtian counts it his only happineſſe to enjoy his God, and his onely unhappineſſe

Qui te non habet Domine Deus, totum perdidit. Bern.

pineſſe to be deprived of him: the conſtant language of a Chriſtian is, *None but God, none but God*, as it vvas once the language of the Martyr, *None but Chriſt, None but Chriſt.*

Outvvard loſſes to ſome men have been unſufferably afflictive: one being turned out of his eſtate runs out of his vvits, another hangs himſelf vvith the ſame hands vvith vvhich he had formerly told his portion. *Meniptus* of *Phenicia* having loſt his goods, ſtrangled himſelf. *Dinarcus Phidon* at a certain great loſſe cut his ovvn throat, to ſave the charge of a cord. When *Henry* the ſecond had heard that his City *Menze* was taken, he let fall this blaſphemous ſpeech, I ſhall never (ſaid he) love God any more, that hath ſuffered a City ſo dear to me to be taken away from me. And *Auguſtus Cæſar* (in whoſe time Chriſt was born) was ſo troubled and aſtoniſhed at the loſſe and overthrow

Suetonius.

that

that *Varus* gave him, that for certain moneths together he let the hair of his head and beard grow without cutting, and ſometimes he would run his head againſt the very doors, and cry out, *Quintilius Varus*, deliver up my Legions again, *Quintilius Varus*, deliver up my Legions again, &c. I might give you many ſad inſtances neerer home, but that I love not to harp upon ſo ſad a ſtring. But certainly no outward loſſes can lie ſo heavy upon the ſpirit of a worldling, as the loſſe of God lies upon the ſpirit of a Saint. I have read of a religious woman, that having brought forth nine children, profeſſed, that ſhe had rather indure all the pains of thoſe nine Travails at once, than indure the miſery of the loſſe of Gods preſence. A man can better bear any loſſe than the loſſe of his box of Jewels, and than the loſſe of his Writings and Evidences that he hath to ſhew for his eſtate; and therefore when his houſe is on fire, he doth

Compare the 77. and the 88. Pſalms together.

doth not cry out, O ſave that bed, or that cheſt, or that diſh, or that ſtool, &c. but he cries out, O ſave my box of Jewels, O ſave my Writings, I care not though all be conſumed, ſo my box of Jewels, and my Evidences be but ſaved. Now God is a Chriſtians box of Jewels, he is a Chriſtians grand evidence that he hath to ſhew for another world; and therefore his greateſt fear is of loſing his God, and his greateſt care is of keeping his God; If his box of Jewels be ſafe, then all is ſafe; but if they are loſt, all is loſt; and how then is it poſſible for a Chriſtian to bear up bravely under the loſſe of all? A man may bear up bravely under the loſſe of his Lumber, and and under the loſſe of his houſhold-goods, ſo long as his Jewels are ſafe, and his Writings are ſafe; but if his box of Jewels ſhould be loſt, and his Writings ſhould be burn't, why then he wrings his hands, and cries out, O I am undone, I am undone, I am undone;

So

So a Christian can bear up bravely under this worldly losse, and that worldly los, and the other worldly losse so long as he enjoyes his God, but when he hath lost his God, O then he cannot but wring his hands, and cry out, I am undone, I am undone, I am undone, I have lost my God, and in losing of him I have lost my life, I have lost my love, I have lost my joy, I have lost my Crown, I have lost my heaven, I have lost my happinesse, I have lost my all. O Christians, if God be your portion, it will be thus with you upon the los of your God. But

Tenthly, If God be thy portion, then thou wilt set the highest price, value, & esteem upon those that have God for their portion. A man that hath God for his portion never values men by their arts, parts, gifts, gay cloaths, gold chains, no not by their birth, breeding, high offices, or great places, no nor by their outward dignities, 10. Psal. 16.3. Pro. 12.26. & ch. 28.6.

nities, honours, or riches, &c. but by their interest and propriety in God. A man that hath God for his portion prizes a poor ragged *Lazarus* that hath God for his portion before a rich *Dives* that hath onely gold for his portion. If thou hast God for thy portion, then there is no man in Court, City, or Countrey to that man that hath God for his portion, then there is no man in a Parish, a County, a Kingdome to him that hath God for his portion; a man that hath God for his portion hath an higher esteem and a greater respect for a *Job*, though stript of all, and sitting upon a dunghil, than he hath for a wicked *Ahab*, though sitting on his royal Throne. *Paul* set an higher price upon *Onesimus*, though but a servant, a slave, because he had God for his portion, than he did upon *Nero*, though he was a great and mighty Emperor. And King *Ingo* valued poor ragged Christians that had God for their portion, above all his glitter-

Phil. 10. 12, 17.
2 Tim. 4. 17

ing

ing Pagan Nobles that had onely the world for their portion, ſaying, that when all his Pagan Nobles ſhould in all their pomp and glory be turned into hell, thoſe poor Chriſtians that had God for their portion ſhould be his Conſorts and fellow-Princes in heaven. Look, as men that have their portion in this world do value men according to their worldly portions; ſo that they that have moſt gold and ſilver, and they that have moſt Lordſhips and Lands, they are the beſt men, the happieſt men, the only men in their eyes: So a Chriſtian that hath God for his portion, he ſets the higheſt value upon thoſe that have God for their portion, and there are no men in all the world that are ſo high in his books as they are. A man that hath an intereſt in God loves none, nor likes none, nor honours none, nor delights in none, nor exalts none, nor values none to thoſe that have God for their portion; though the men, the

great men of this world may sit in the uppermost seats at his table, yet they that have God for their portion sit in the uppermost rooms of his heart. The Jews say, that those seventy souls that went with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, were as much worth as all the seventy Nations in the world: And I may say, that one soul that hath God for his portion is more worth than all the souls in the world that have only the world for their portion. A man that hath God for his portion, cannot but set a very high value upon all those that have God for their portion, though in disputable things they may differ from him. A man that hath God for his portion had rather live with those that have God for their portion in a prison, in a dungeon, than live with those that have only the world for their portion in a royal Palace. As *Algerius* an Italian Martyr was wont to say, that he had rather live in prison with *Cato*, than with *Cæsar* in the Se-

Senate-house. And Doctor *Taylor* the Martyr rejoyced exceedingly that ever he came into prison, because he came there to have acquaintance with that Angel of God *John Bradford*, as he calls him. When *Joseph* was in *Egypt* the Scripture saith (according to the Hebrew phrase) *That he tied the Princes of* Pharaohs *Court about his heart*; so a man that hath God for his portion, he doth as it were tie those that have God for their portion about his heart; O he is alwayes best when they are most in his eye, and neerest to his heart; 'tis his happinesse on this side happinesse to enjoy communion with them, and 'tis the greatest unhappinesse in this world to be separated from them. A man that hath God for his portion values the company of such that have God for their portion above all other company in the world, and he values the favour of such above all other mens favour in the world, and he values the prayers of such

Psa. 105. 22.

Psa. 120. 5, 6, 7.

above all other mens prayers in the world, and he values the counſel of ſuch above all other mens counſel in the world, and he values the experiences of ſuch above all other mens experiences in the world, and he values the intereſt of ſuch above all other mens intereſt in the world, and he values the hopes and expectations of ſuch above all other mens hopes and expectations in the world, and he values the examples of ſuch above the examples of all other men in the world, and he values the diſpleaſure and anger of ſuch above all other mens diſpleaſure and anger in the world. But

11. Eleventhly, If God be your portion, then you are his portion; if you have an intereſt in God, then God hath an intereſt in you; if you have a propriety in God, then God hath a propriety in you; if God be truly yours, then you are really his, *Cant.* 2. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his*; Pſal. 119. 94.

I

I am thine, save me;

There are none that have that large interest and propriety in the Saints that God hath, *Zech.*2.12 *And the Lord shall inherit* Judah *his portion in the holy land, and shall chuse* Jerusalem *again.*

I am not mine own, I am not sins, I am not Satans, I am not the worlds, I am not friends, I am not relations, but I am thine, save me, I am really thine, I am totally thine, I am solely thine, I am everlastingly thine, save me; *Ezek.* 16.8. *I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine*; *Deut.*32.9. *For the Lords portion is his people*, Jacob *is the lot of his inheritance*: though Gods people are despised of the world, yet they are dear to God, for they are his portion. In those words, Jacob *is the lot of his inheritance*, he alludes to the division of the land of *Canaan*, as if the sons of *Jacob* had fallen to him by lot. The Lords people are as dear to God, and as neer to God, and in as great account with God, as earthly portions and inheritances are or can be among the sons of men; *Jer.*12.10.

Many Pastors have destroyed my Vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion (or as the Hebrew hath it, my portion of delire, or of delight) *a desolate wilderneſſe.* Gods people are not onely his portion, but they are his pleasant portion, yea, they are his desireable portion, his delightful portion. If the Lord be your portion, then you are his inheritance, *Isa.* 19. 25. and his peculiar treasure, *Exo.* 19. 5. and his glory, *Isa.* 46. 13. and his ornament, *Ezek.* 7. 20. and his throne, *Jer.* 4. 21. and his Diadem, *Isa.* 62. 3. and his jewels, *Mal.* 3. 17. These Scriptures speaks out plainly and clearly that great propriety and interest that God hath in all those that have a propriety and interest in him. O Sirs, look that as in all God hath you have an interest; so in all that you have God hath an interest; and look as what God is, he is for you, so what you are, you are for God; and look, as God is sincerely for you, so you

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are ſincerely for God; and as God is wholly for you, ſo you are wholly for God; and as God is onely for you, ſo you are onely for God; and as God is in all things for you, ſo you are in all things for God; and as God is at all times for you, ſo you are at all times for God. O Sirs, there are none under heaven that have that intereſt in you as God hath, if indeed he be your portion. Look what intereſt the head hath in the members, the husband in the wife, the father in the child, the Lord in his ſervant, the General in his ſouldier, and the Prince in his ſubject, that, all that, and more than that hath God in all thoſe that have an intereſt in him. There is no man in the world that hath ſuch an intereſt in himſelf, as God hath in him, if indeed God be his portion. Sinne cannot ſay to a man that hath God for his portion, Thou art mine; nor Satan cannot ſay to a man that hath God for his portion, Thou art mine; nor the World cannot

ſay to a man that hath God for his portion, Thou art mine; nor the Creature cannot ſay to a man that hath God for his portion, Thou art mine; it is onely God that can ſay to ſuch a man, Thou art mine. As in marriage, none can ſay, This woman is mine, but the husband; ſo none can ſay to a man that hath God for his portion, Thou art mine, but God alone. Look, as no man can truly ſay, That God is my Lord, and my God, and my father, and my friend, and my wiſdome, and my counſel, and my righteouſneſſe, and my conſolation, and my ſalvation, and my portion, and my light, and my life, and my love, and my rock, and my fortreſſe, and my deliverer, & my ſtrength, and my buckler, and my high tower, and my help, and my happineſs, and my bleſſednes, and my all in all, but he that hath God for his portion; ſo none but God can look upon a gracious perſon, and ſay, This gracious perſon is mine, he

Pſa. 8. 1, 2.

he is my bride, my child, my friend, my favourite, my beloved, my darling, my joy, my crown; his heart is ſet upon me, and his love is inflamed towards me, and his truſt and confidence is fixed on me, and his deſires and longings are running out after me, and all his joyes and delights are terminated in me. But

Twelfthly, If God be your portion, then certainly the leaſt of God is very dear and precious to you: O then the leaſt truth of God will be very precious to you, and the leaſt command of God will be very precious to you, and the leaſt child of God will be very precious to you, and the leaſt concernment of God will be very precious to you. Look, as the leaſt beam of light is precious, and as the leaſt drop of honey is precious, and as the leaſt duſt of gold is precious, and as the leaſt degree of health and ſtrength is precious, and as the leaſt meaſure of liberty is pre- 12.

precious; so the very least of God is very precious to that man that hath God for his portion. Look, as every little piece and parcel of a worldly mans portion is very dear and precious to him; so every little piece and parcel of God (if I may so speak) is very dear and precious to him that hath God for his portion. The least glimpse and manifestations of the love and favour of God, the least taste of the mercies of God, the least anointings of the Spirit of God, the least comunications of the grace of God, & the least drops of the consolations of God, are exceeding sweet & precious to him that hath God for his portion: The least good look that a man hath from God, and the least good word that a man hears from God, and the least love-letter and love-token that a man receives from God, is exceeding precious to that man that hath God for his portion: *One day in thy Courts is better than a thousand elsewhere*: he doth not say, one year

Psal. 84. 10.

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in thy Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere, but *one day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere*; nor he doth not ſay, one quarter of a year in thy Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere, but *one day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere*; nor he doth not ſay, one moneth in thy Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere, but *one day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere*; to ſhew, that the very leaſt of God is exceeding precious to a gracious ſoul that hath God for his portion.

Now by theſe twelve particulars you may all know whether God be your portion or no, except you are reſolved before-hand to put a cheat upon your own immortal ſouls, and ſo to make your ſelves miſerable in both worlds. And let thus much ſuffice for this uſe of trial and examination.

Now if upon trial and examination any of you ſhall come to ſome comfortable ſatisfaction in your

your own ſpirits, that God is your portion, and that you have an undoubted intereſt and propriety in God, O then I would upon the knee of my ſoul intreat, and beſeech you, (I might ſay, charge and command you) to evidence and declare to all the world your intereſt and propriety in God.

But you will ſay, how ſhould we evidence and declare to the world our intereſt and propriety in God? we are willing to do it, if we did but know how we ſhould do it. Why then thus:

1. Num. 11. 29 John 1. 39--49. Ch. 4. 28, 29, 30. Acts 10. 24, 25, 27.

Firſt, Evidence and declare your intereſt and propriety in God, by your labouring and indeavouring with all your might to draw on others to get an intereſt and propriety in God. O Sirs, have you been convinced of the neceſſity and excellency of intereſt and propriety in God? have you experienced the profit, the ſweet, the comfort, and the happineſſe of pro-

propriety and interest in God? and how then can you but strive, as for life, to perswade others to look after their interest and propriety in Christ, as the one thing necessary? When *Sampson* had tasted honey, he gave his father and mother some with him. O my brethren, propriety and interest in God is so sweet a morsel, that I cannot see how it is possible for a man to tast of it, and not to commend it to others; they that have tasted, that the Lord is gracious, cannot but cry out with the Psalmist, *O tast and see that the Lord is good.* Propriety and interest in God will never make a man a churle, it will never work a man to make a monopoly of so rare a jewel as that is. O the fervent prayers! O the burning desires! O the vehement wishes! O the strong indeavours of such that have an interest and propriety in God, to draw on others to seek after an interest and propriety in God! All true propriety and interest in God is of a diffusive nature,

Judg. 14. 8, 9.

Psal. 34. 8.

ture, it is like light that will ſpread it ſelf over all, it is like leaven that will run through all, it is like *Maries* box of ſweet ointment that filled all the houſe with the ſweet ſcent thereof. If thou art a Miniſter, evidence thy propriety in God, in doing all thou canſt to provoke thoſe that are under thy charge to ſecure their propriety in God; other things cannot be ſecured, but propriety in God may be ſecured. If thou art a Magiſtrate that haſt a propriety in God, evidence it by doing all thou canſt by thy commands, and by thy counſel, and by thy example, and by thy prayers, to perſwade, and win others over to be reſtleſſe, till they have ſecured their intereſt and propriety in God. If thou art a father that haſt intereſt and propriety in God; O then let thy ſoul be ſtill in travail for thy children, till Chriſt be formed in them, till they are new-born, and till they have experienced the power and ſweet of propriety and intereſt

Act. 26. 29

Joſh. 24 15

tereſt in God. But

Secondly, Evidence your propriety and intereſt in God, by keeping far off from all ſuch ſinful courſes, practiſes, and compliances that may any ways put your ſelves or others to queſtion the truth of your propriety and intereſt in God. Thus did thoſe worthies, of whom this world was not worthy, in that *Heb.* 11. It is very obſervable that when the holy things belonging to the Sanctuary were to be removed, God commanded *Aaron* and his ſons, that there ſhould be a ſpecial care had to cover them all over, leſt in journeying duſt ſhould any wayes ſoil them. O beloved, it highly concerns you that have an intereſt and propriety in God, to look narrowly to your hearts, words, works, and wayes, and to ſee that there be ſuch a covering of grace and holineſſe, ſuch a covering of care, fear, wiſdome, watchfulneſſe, and circumſpection over your whole man, that no ſcandalous ſins, pollutions, or defilements

2.

Num. 4. 5. to 13.

Rev. 14. 3,4,5. Chap. 3. 4.

filements be found upon you, according to that exhortation of the Apoſtle, in that *Phil.* 2. 15. *That ye may be blameleſſe, and harmleſſe, the ſons of God, without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, among whom ye ſhine* (or *ſhine ye*) *as lights in the world.* I have read of the Dove, that there is ſuch a native dread of the Hawk implanted in her, that ſhe is afraid of every feather that hath grown upon a Hawk, and that ſhe ſo deteſts and abhors the very ſight of any ſuch feather, that ſhe will fly from it, and keep at the greateſt diſtance imaginable from it: And ſhall not that divine fear, O Chriſtians, that is planted by the hand of the Spirit in your hearts, be of as great a force and prevalency to keep your ſouls from all thoſe enormities and wicked compliances that may in the leaſt occaſion you or others to queſtion your propriety and intereſt? remember *Francis Spira*, and tremble. You know a Scrivener may by one great blot at laſt ſpoil all that

that he hath done for many dayes before upon a large Patent or Leaſe; ſo a man may by one foul blot, by one enormous crime, by one wretched act of compliance, daſh and obliterate the faireſt copy of a vertuous life, and raze out all the viſible golden characters of divine graces, that once ſeemed to be printed upon the ſoul. Look, as one drop of ink coloureth a whole glaſſe of clear water; ſo one groſs ſin, one ſhameful action, one hours compliance with any thing of Antichriſt will colour and ſtain all the great things that ever you have ſuffered, and all the good things that ever you have performed; it will ſtain and colour all the good prayers that ever you have made, and all the good Sermons that ever you have heard, and all the good books that ever you have read, and all the good words that ever you have ſpoke, and all the good works that ever you have done: And therefore whatever you do, keep off from ſinne, and

keep off from all sinful compliances, as you would keep off from hell it self. But

3. Thirdly, Declare and evidence your propriety and interest in God by maintaining and keeping up the sense of your interest and propriety in God, in opposition to all other interest whatsoever; maintain your interest in God, in opposition to sins interest, and in opposition to Satans interest, and in opposition to the worlds interest, and in opposition to Antichrists interest, and in opposition to all carnal and superstitious interests; as *Moses* did, and as *Joshuah* and *Caleb* did, and as *Mordecai* and *Nehemiah* did, and as *Daniel* and the three Children did, and as the Apostles and the primitive Christians did. Certainly the heart of a gracious man cannot but rise, and his anger and indignation cannot but swell against every thing and every interest that threatens to make a breach upon his interest and propriety

Psal. 63. 1. Rev. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Num. 14.

Psal. 69. 9. Psa. 15. 5.

priety in God. A man that hath an intereſt and propriety in God, in the midſt of all oppoſitions is like a man made up all of fire, walking in ſtubble and ſtraw, he overcomes and conſumes all oppoſitions, and all difficulties are but whetſtones to his fortitude; he incourages his ſoul in the face of all oppoſitions and dangers, as *Hezekiah* once did his ſouldiers in that 2 *Chron.* 32.7,8. *Be ſtrong and courageous, be not diſmayed for the King of* Aſſyria, *nor for all the multitude that is with him; for there be more with us, than with him: With him is an arm of fleſh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battels. And the people reſted themſelves upon the words of* Hezekiah, *King of* Judah. He is a fool, we ſay, that will be laughed out of his Coat; but certainly he is a fool in *Folio* that will be laughed out of his skin, nay, out of his ſoul, out of his profeſſion, out of his eternal ſalvation: but doubtleſſe ſuch fools as theſe have never experienced

the sweet of propriety and interest in God. Without all peradventure there were many broad jests and many bitter scoffs broken upon *Noah*, whil'st he was a building of his Ark; the people laugh't at him, and derided him, and thought the poor old man doted and dreamed, not as we say of a dry Summer, but of a wet Winter: but yet *Noahs* propriety and interest in God being clear, *Noah* begins his work, and goes on his work, and never ceases till he had finished that work that God had set him about.

Alciat observes in one of his Emblems, that a dog then barketh most, when the Moon is at fullest: (but whether it be by some special influence that it then worketh in the dog; or whether it be occasioned by the spots in the Moon represented unto him in the forme and shape of another dog, I shall not conclude:) but yet let the dog bark never so much, the Moon will run her course, she will walk her station securely through the Hea-

Heavens, though all the dogs in the Town bark never so fiercely at her; so a man that hath an interest and propriety in God (and knows it) he is like the Moon, he will hold on his course heavenwards, and holinesse-wards, though all the lewd and debauched wicked wretches in City and Countrey should bark at him, and deride him, and oppose him, and speak all manner of evil against him. Propriety and interest in God will make a man set light by all such paper-shot, yea, it will carry him through the pikes, not onely of evil tongues, but it will also carry him through the most fierce and eager opposition that either Satan himself, or any of his instruments can possibly raise against him. But

Fourthly, Declare and evidence your propriety and interest in God by your sweet and noble carriage and deportment towards those that have an interest and propriety 4.

in God. Look, as a child carries it in a different way to his Father to what he doth to others, so you must carry it in a different way towards those that have an interest and propriety in God, to what you do towards those that have no interest nor propriety at all in God. Though a wife be very kind and courteous to all comers and goers, yet she carries it in a very different way to her husband from what she doth to all others, she carries it with a great deal more kindnesse, and sweetnesse, and tendernesse, and familiarnesse, and nobleneſſe, &c. towards her husband, than she doth towards others, whether they be friends or strangers: And just thus should you carry it towards those that have a propriety and interest in God. I have not faith enough to believe that such men have any interest and propriety in God, who carry it very strangely and proudly, and churlishly, and scornfully, and deridingly, and tyrannically, and

and disdainfully, and enviously, and maliciously, and rigorously, and sowrly, and bitterly, &c. towards those that have an interest and propriety in God, and yet carry it at the same time very fairly, and sweetly, and courteously, &c. towards such wretches that have no interest or propriety in God at all, yea, to such that blaspheme his Name, and that prophane his Sabbaths, and that pollute his Ordinances, and that trample upon his mercies, and that despise his warnings, and that are given up to their own hearts lusts, and that live as if there were neither God, nor heaven, nor hell. But

Fifthly, Evidence your interest and propriety in God, by doing such things for God, which such as have no interest in God cannot do, nor will not do, nor have no heart nor minde to do; evidence your interest in God, by doing singular things for God, by doing such things for God that are above

5. Matth. 5. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48.

their reach that have no interest nor propriety in God at all; As by denying your selves, your sinful selves, your natural selves, and your religious selves; and by keeping a singular guard upon your owne hearts, words, and wayes; and by stepping over the Worlds Crown to take up Christs Crosse, as *Moses* did; and by lessening your selves to greaten Christ, as *John* did; and by lifting up of Christ above your lusts, above your selves, above the world, above outward priviledges, above your performances, above your arts, parts, and gifts, as *Paul* did; and by blessing a taking God as well as a giving God, as *Job* did; and by rejoycing and glorying in all the afflictions and sufferings that befalls you for Christs sake and the Gospels sake, as the Apostles and primitive Christians did; and by chusing to suffer rather than to sin, as those Worthies did of whom this world was not worthy; and by keeping of your selves

Heb. 11.

Joh. 3.30, 31, 32.

Phil. 3.7,8, 9.

Job 1.

Heb. 11.

ſelves from the defilements, pollutions, and abominations of the times, as ſome in *Sardis* did; and by following of the Lamb whereſoever he goes, as thoſe hundred fourty and four thouſand did, who had their fathers name written in their foreheads. O Sirs, it is infinitely better not to challenge any intereſt or propriety in God at all, then to pretend high as to intereſt and propriety in God, and yet to do no more for God (nay it may be not ſo much) than they that have no intereſt nor propriety in God at all. But

Rev. 3. 4.

Chap. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Sixthly and laſtly, Evidence your intereſt and propriety in God, by falling roundly in with the intereſt of God, in oppoſition to all carnal intereſts in the world. O Sirs, the intereſt of God will by degrees eat out and ſwallow up all other intereſts in the world. Look as *Pharaohs* lean kine eat up the fat, and as *Aarons* rod ſwallowed up the Egyptians rods, ſo the intereſt

6.

Gen. 41. 4. Exod. 7. 11, 12.

Isa.8 9,10. tereſt of God will in time eat up and ſwallow up all that ſuperſtitious carnal worldly Antichriſtian and Satanical intereſt that men labour now to uphold with all their might; *Dan.* 2. 35. *Then was the iron, the clay, the braſſe, the ſilver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threſhing-floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the ſtone that ſmote the Image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.* Verſe 44. *And in the dayes of theſe Kings ſhall the God of heaven ſet up a Kingdom, which ſhall never be deſtroyed; and the Kingdome ſhall not be left to other people, but it ſhall break in pieces, and conſume all theſe Kingdomes, and it ſhall ſtand for ever.* And ſo, Chap. 7. 27. *And the Kingdom & dominion, & the greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven ſhall be given to the people of the Saints of the moſt High, whoſe Kingdom is an everlaſting Kingdome, and all Dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him.* Rev. 17. 12,13,14. *And the ten hornes which*

then

thou sawest, are ten Kings, which have received no Kingdome as yet; but receive power as Kings one hour with the beast: these have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast: these shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, and they that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful. If these Scriptures do not clearly evidence, that the interest of Christ shall swallow up all other interests, I understand nothing. Now mark, the people of God are the interest of God, and the Gospel of God is the interest of God, and the Ordinances of God are the interest of God, and the institutions and pure worship of God are the interest of God, &c. And therefore all you that have an interest and propriety in God, evidence it by your ready and resolute falling in with the interest of God. Believe it, they that fall in with the interest of God, fall in with the strongest side, and will be

sure

ſure to carry it againſt ten thouſand worlds: What is the ſtubble to the flames? what is weakneſſe to ſtrength? what is impotency to omnipotency? what is folly to wiſdome? what is emptineſſe to fulneſſe? no more are all the carnal intereſts in the world to the intereſt of God; and therefore thrice happy is that man that falls timely and cordially in with the intereſt of God.

But now, if upon trial and examination any of you ſhall finde that yet the Lord is not your portion, (and this I believe will be the caſe of many of you) I would exhort all ſuch perſons to labour with all their might, yea, to labour as for life, to get the Lord to be their portion. O Sirs, this is the one thing neceſſary, this is the Sun among the ſtars, this is the work of works that lies upon your hands; when this is done all is done, till this be done there is nothing done that will do you good

in

in another world. O Sirs, your lives lies upon it, your souls lie upon it, eternity lies upon it, your all lies upon it, and therefore you had need be restlesse, till you have gained the Lord to be your portion.

Now that I may the more effectually provoke you, and stir you up to this great and glorious, this necessary and weighty work, give me leave to propose these following Considerations.

First, Consider, that thy present portion, thy present condition is but miserable and curſed: All the earth was curſt upon mans fall, and till fallen man comes to be interested in God, all his earthly enjoyments are curſt unto him, his honours are curſt, and his riches are curſt, and his preferments are curſt, and his pleasures are curſt; the whole portion of his cup is nothing but a little curſed vanity, *Job* 20. 23, 24, 25, 28, 29. *When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury* 1.

Levit. 26. Deut. 28.

fury of his wrath upon him, and ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating. He ſhall flee from the iron weapon, and the bowe of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through. It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the gliſtering ſword cometh out of his gall; terrours are upon him. The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and his goods ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God. And ſo Chap. 24. 18. *He is ſwift as the waters, their portion is curſed in the earth; he beholdeth not the way of the Vineyards.* Prov. 3. 33. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked.* Mal. 2. 2. *If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my Name, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, I will even ſend a curſe upon you, and I will curſe your bleſſings, yea, I have curſed them already, becauſe ye do not lay it to heart.* There is a real curſe, and a ſecret curſe; an inviſible curſe, and an inſenſible curſe that lies upon all their ſouls that have not God for their portion; *Gal.* 3. 10. *Curſed is*

every

every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them. And as there is a curse upon all their souls, so there is a curse upon all their comforts, contentments, and enjoyments, that enjoy not God for their portion; till a man comes to enjoy God for his portion, all his earthly portions are curst unto him, but when a man comes to enjoy God for his portion, then all his earthly portions are blest unto him. O Sirs, there is no mitigating of the curse, there is no reversing of the curse, there is no altering of the curse, nor there is no taking of the curse from off your souls, nor from off your earthly portions, but by gaining God to be your portion. O Sirs you will live accursed, and you will die accursed, and you will appear before God accursed, and you will be judged and sentenced by God accursed, and you will be sent to hell accursed, and you will remain to all eternity accursed, if God be not

not your portion: and therefore, O how should this Consideration awaken every sinner to give God no rest till he hath given himself as a portion to him! But

2. Secondly, Consider this, that there is yet a possibility of attaining God to be thy portion; all the Angels in heaven, and all the men on earth do not know to the contrary, but that God may be thy portion, even thine. If thou art but heartily willing to be divorced from that wicked Trinity, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, there is no doubt but God will be thy portion. O Sirs, why hath God laid open so clearly and so fully the nature and incomparable excellency of this portion above all other portions before you, but to perswade your hearts, and to draw out your souls to look after this portion, and to make sure this portion, as that wherein all your happinesse and blessednesse lies? O that you were wise to consider, that

Mark 14. 36. Luk. 18. 27.

that now a prize, an opportunity is put into your hands that may make you for ever; you have all the wayes, and all the means, and all the helps, and all the advantages imaginable for the obtaining of God to be your portion, ſo that if God be not your portion, I ſhall be ſo bold to tell you, that your deſtruction is from your ſelves. Hoſ.13.9.

O Sirs, though God be a golden Myne, yet he is ſuch a Myne that may be come at, if you will but dig, and ſweat, and take pains to purpoſe; though he be a pearl of infinite price, yet Chriſt can purchaſe this Pearl for you; though he be a matchleſſe and incomparable portion, yet he is ſuch a portion as may be yours, as will be yours, if you are not wanting to your own ſouls. Pro.2.2,3, 4,5,6,7.

Why hath God ſent his Ambaſſadours early and late? and why hath he, even to a miracle, continued them amongſt you to this very day? but that they ſhould acquaint you with his wonderful readineſſe and willing- 2 Cor.5. 18,19,20.

Pſa. 105. 8. Epheſ. 2. 4. Pſal. 86. 15. 1 Pet. 1 1. 3. Pſa. 103. 11.

neſſe to beſtow himſelf as a portion upon you. O Sirs, God is ſaid to be a God of great mercy, and to be rich and plenteous in mercy, and to be abundant in mercy, and to be tranſcendent and incomparable in mercy; yea, all the mercies of God are ſure mercies, they are royal mercies, they are innumerable mercies, they are bottomleſs mercies, they are unchangeable mercies, and they are everlaſting mercies; and therefore there is no reaſon for any man to deſpair of obtaining of God for his portion. But

3. Thirdly, Conſider that God is a portion-ſweetning portion; God is ſuch a portion as will ſweeten all other portions; he is a portion that will make every pleaſant portion more pleaſant, and that will make every bitter portion ſweet. Poverty is one mans portion, and ſorrow is another mans portion, and croſſes and loſſes are a third mans portion, and reproaches and ſuffer-

ſufferings are a fourth mans portion, and ſickneſſe and diſeaſes are a fifth mans portion, &c. But now God is a portion that will ſweeten all theſe portions: You know the Tree that *Moſes* caſt into the bitter waters of *Marah* made them ſweet; now this Tree was a type of Chriſt, who will certainly ſweeten all our bitterest potions. The Church complained in that *Lament.* 3. 15. *That God had filled her with bitterneſſe* (or as the Hebrew hath it, *with bitterneſſes*) *and that he had made her drunken with wormwood*; and yet this very Conſideration, *That the Lord was her portion*, *v.* 24. *ſweetned all.* If God be thy portion, there is no condition that can make thee miſerable; if God be not thy portion, there is no condition that can make thee happy: If God be not thy portion, in the midſt of thy ſufficiency thou wilt be in ſtraits; if God be thy portion, in the midſt of all thy ſtraits thou ſhalt enjoy an all-ſufficiency in an all-ſufficient God. Till

Exod. 15. 23, 24, 25.

Job. 20. 22

God be thy portion, O ſinner, thou will never taſte any thing but death and bitterneſſe in all thy comforts, and in all thy contentments, and in all thy enjoyments. But

4. Fourthly, Conſider that all earthly portions are not of that infinite conſequence and concernment to you, as this portion is; all earthly portions are but the meat that periſheth, they are but moth-eaten and canker-eaten treaſures, they are full of uncertainty, yea, they are all over vanity, they reach not beyond the line of this mortal life; they can neither ſuit the ſoul, nor fill the ſoul, nor ſatisfie the ſoul, nor ſave the ſoul; they can neither change the heart, nor reform the heart, nor in the leaſt better the heart; they can neither arm a man againſt temptations, nor lead a man out of temptations, nor make a man victorious over temptations; they can neither direct the conſcience when 'tis in ſtraits,

John 6. 27. Matt. 6. 19. James 5. 3. Eccleſ. 1.

ſtraits, nor relieve the conſcience when 'tis under diſtreſs, nor ſupport the conſcience when it is under guilt, nor heal the conſcience when it is under wounds; they can neither make our peace with God, nor keep our peace with God, nor augment our peace with God; they can neither bring us to Chriſt, nor unite us to Chriſt, nor keep us with Chriſt, nor transform us into the ſimilitude or likeneſſe of Chriſt; they can neither bring us to heaven, nor fit us for heaven, nor aſſure us of heaven: In a word, no earthly portion can free us from death, nor in the leaſt avail us in the day of wrath. By all which it is moſt evident that all earthly portions are of very little conſequence and concernment to the ſons of men, to the ſouls of men. O but now God is a portion of infinite conſequence and concernment to all the ſons and ſouls of men. No man can hear as he ſhould, nor pray as he ſhould, nor live as he ſhould, nor die as

he should, till God be his portion; no man is secure from temporal, spiritual, or eternal judgments, till God be his portion: no man can be happy in this world, or blessed in another world, till God be his portion. O Sirs, it is not absolutely necessary that you should have this or that earthly portion, but 'tis absolutely necessary that you should have God for your portion; for if God be not your portion, all the Angels in heaven, nor all the men on earth cannot prevent your being miserable to all eternity.

5. Fifthly, Consider, that till a man comes to have God for his portion he never comes to be temptation-proof: A man that hath God for his portion is temptation-proof, he will say when tempted, as *Themistocles* did, Give those bracelets to slaves; and as *Basil* did, who (when he was offered temporary honour, glory, and wealth, &c.) answered, Give me glory which abides

abides for ever, and give me riches which will indure for ever: And as he did, who being tempted with offers of money to deſert his Religion, gave this excellent anſwer, Let not any think, that he will imbrace other mens goods to forſake Chriſt, who hath forſaken his own proper goods to follow Chriſt: And as that Martyr did, who when he had riches and honours offered him, if he would recant, anſwered, Do but offer me ſomewhat that is better than my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and you ſhall ſee what I will ſay to you: And as *Hormiſda*, a noble man in the King of *Perſia*'s Court did, who becauſe he would not deny Chriſt, he was put into ragged clothes, deprived of his honours, and ſet to keep the camels; after a long time, the King ſeeing him in that

When *Phyrrhus* tempted *Fabricius* the firſt day with an Elephant, ſo huge and monſtrous a Beaſt, as before he had not ſeen, and the next day with money and promiſes of honour, he anſwered, I fear not thy force, and I am too wiſe for thy fraud. If nature could do this, grace can do more.

base condition, and remembring his former Fortunes, he pitied him, and caused him to be brought into the Palace, and to be cloathed again like a noble man, and then perswades and tempts him afresh to deny Christ, whereupon this noble Spirit presently rended his Silken Clothes, saying, If for these you think to have me deny my Faith, take them again, and so he was cast out with scorn the second time: And what was that that made the Apostles temptation-proof, and that made those Worthies temptation-proof, *Heb.* 11. and that made the primitive Christians temptation-proof, and that made the Martyrs in Queen *Maries* dayes temptation-proof? Certainly, nothing more than this very Consideration, that God was their portion. Ah sinners, sinners, you will certainly fall, you will readily fall, you will easily fall, you will frequently fall, you will dreadfully fall before temptations til you come to enjoy God for your por-

portion. Every blaſt & every wind of temptation will overſet & overturn that man that hath not God for his portion: Such a man may pray a thouſand times over and over, *Lord, lead me not into temptation*, and yet every day fall before the leaſt temptation, as common experience doth abundantly evidence; whereas a man that hath God for his portion will ſtand faſt like a rock in all ſtorms, yea, in the face of all temptations he will be like Mount *Zion* that cannot be removed. *Luther* counſels every Chriſtian to anſwer all temptations with this ſhort ſaying, *Chriſtianus ſum*, I am a Chriſtian; and I would counſel every Chriſtian to anſwer all temptations with this ſhort ſaying, *The Lord is my portion*. O Chriſtian, when Satan or the world ſhall tempt thee with honours, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion*; when they ſhall tempt thee with riches, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion*; when they ſhall tempt thee with preferments, anſwer, *The Lord*

Luther in Gen.

Lord is my portion; and when they ſhall tempt thee with the favours of great ones, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion*; yea, and when this perſecuting world ſhall threaten thee with the loſſe of thy eſtate, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion*; and when they ſhall threaten thee with the loſſe of thy liberty, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion*; and when they ſhall threaten thee with the loſſe of friends, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion*; and when they ſhall threaten thee with the loſſe of life, anſwer, *The Lord is my portion.* O Sirs, if Satan ſhould come to you with an apple, as once he did to *Eve*, tell him that *The Lord is your portion*; or with a grape, as once he did to *Noah*, tell him, that *The Lord is your portion*; or with a change of raiment, as once he did to *Gehezi*, tell him, that *The Lord is your portion*; or with a wedge of gold, as once he did to *Achan*, tell him that *The Lord is your portion*; or with a bag of money, as once he did to *Judas*, tell him that *The Lord is*

is your portion; or with a Crown, a Kingdome, as once he did to *Moſes*, tell him, that *The Lord is your portion.* But,

Sixthly and laſtly, If God be not your portion, you will be miſerable to all eternity; if God be not your portion, wrath muſt be your portion, hell muſt be your portion, everlaſting burnings muſt be your portion, a devouring fire muſt be your portion, and a ſeparation for ever from the glorious preſence of God, Chriſt, Angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect muſt be your portion; as you may clearly ſee by comparing the Scriptures in the Margin together. If God be not your portion in this life, you ſhall never have him for your portion in another life; if God be not your portion here, he will never be your portion hereafter. O Sirs, if death ſhould ſurprize you before God is your portion, you will as certainly go to hell, as God is in heaven; and therefore it infinitely concerns you

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Pſal. 11. 6. Pſal. 9. 17. Iſa. 33. 14. Mat. 24. ult 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8, 9, 10. Heb. 12 22, 23, 24.

you to get God for your portion. There is no way in the world to make the King of terrours to be a King of deſires to thy ſoul, O man, but by gaining God for thy portion. Of all terribles death will be moſt terrible and formidable to that man that hath not God for his portion. If thou ſhouldeſt live and die, O man, without having God for thy portion, it had been good for thee that thou hadſt never been born; and if the day of thy birth had been the day of thy death, thy hell would not have been ſo hot as now thou wilt certainly find it.

But now, methinks, I hear ſome crying out, O Sir, what ſhall we do that we may have God for our portion? O had we as many worlds at our diſpoſe as there be ſtars in heaven, we would give them all that we might have God for our portion; O we now ſee that we can never be happy except God be our portion, yea, we now ſee that we ſhall be miſerable to all

all eternity, except God be our portion; and therefore what shall we do, that we may have God for our portion?

Well then, if you would indeed have God for your portion, let me thus advise you.

First, Labour to be very sensible that by nature you are without God, yea, at enmity with God, and alienated from the life and love of God, and that by nature you are children of wrath and disobedience, and in actual armes and rebellion against the great God. O Sirs, never talk of having of God for your portion, till you come to see your selves without God, and till you come to judge your selves unworthy of God. Every man in his natural estate is afar off from God three manner of wayes:

1.

Ephe. 2 12 Rom. 8. 7. Ephe. 2. 18 & ch. 4. 18.

Act 2. 39.

First, In point of opinion and apprehension.

Secondly, In point of fellowship and communion.

Thirdly, In point of grace and conversion.

And

And till a man comes to be sensible of this, he will never desire God to be his portion. But

2. Secondly, If you would have God for your portion, then you must trample upon all other portions, in comparison of God. *Luther* protested, that God should not put him off with the poor things of this world.

Austin prayes, Lord (saith he) whatever thou hast given, take it all away, only give me thy self.

O, go to God, and say, Lord, thou hast given me a portion in money, but this money is not thy self; thou hast given me a portion in lands, but these lands are not thy self; thou hast given me a portion in goods, but these goods are not thy self; thou hast given me a portion in jewels, but these jewels are not thy self; and therefore give me thy self, and I shall say, I have enough: Lord, had I all the world for my portion, yet I should be miserable for ever in that other world, except thou bestowest thy self as a portion upon my soul.

O

O Lord, give me but thy ſelf, and take away what thou pleaſeſt; O give me but thy ſelf, and take away all, ſtrip me of all, and I ſhall with *Job* ſit down and bleſſe a taking God, as well as a giving God. O go to God, and tell him with an humble boldneſſe, that though he hath given thee many good things, yet all thoſe good things will do thee no good, except he beſtow himſelf upon thee, as the only good. O tell him, that he is the firſt good; tell him, that he is the original of all good; tell him, that he is the greateſt good, the nobleſt good; tell him that he is a ſuperlative good, tell him that he is an univerſal good, tell him that he is an unchangeable good, tell him that he is an eternal good, and tell him that he is the moſt ſoul-ſuitable and ſoul-ſatisfying good; and therefore tell him that thou canſt not tell how to live one day without him, yea, that thou knoweſt not how to be happy one hour without him.

But Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, If you would have God for your portion, then of all precious promiſes, of all golden promiſes, plead that moſt, *Zech.* 13.9. *They ſhall call upon my Name, and I will hear them; I will ſay, it is my people, and they ſhall ſay, The Lord is my God.* O Sirs, as ever you would have the great and glorious God for your portion, plead out this noble promiſe cordially with God, plead it out affectionately, plead it out fervently, plead it out frequently, plead it out beleevingly, plead it out reſolutely, plead it out inceſſantly. O Sirs, this choice promiſe is an hive full of heavenly honey, 'tis a paradiſe full of ſweet flowers, 'tis a breaſt that is Iſa. 66.11. full of the milk of conſolation; and therefore be ſtill a ſucking at this breaſt, be ſtill a pleading of this promiſe, follow God with this promiſe early and late, follow him with this promiſe day and night, follow him with this promiſe as the importunate Widow Luk. 18.1. to the 9.v. followed the unjuſt Judge, and give him

him no rest, till he hath made it good to your souls, that he is your God, and that he is your portion, and that he is your salvation, and that he is your all in all: O tell him that above all things in this world your hearts are set on this, to have God to be your God, to have God to be your portion; O tell him that you cannot, tell him that you dare not, tell him that you may not, and tell him that you shall not be satisfied with any thing without God, with any thing below God, with any thing on this side God, with any thing but God; and therefore humbly intreat him, and earnestly beseech him to be your God, and to be your portion. But

Fourthly, If you would have God for your portion, then you must be willing to be his portion; God is resolved upon this, that he will be no mans portion that is not willing to be his; you must make a resignation of your selves

4. Deut. 32. 9 Jer. 12. 10. Zech. 2. 12.

to God, if ever you would enjoy an interest in God; you must be as willing to be his people, as you are willing to have him to be your God; you must be as much at Gods disposé, as earthly portions are at your disposé, or else there will be no enjoying of God to be your Gods. God will ingage himself to none that are not willing to ingage themselves to him; he that will not give his hand & his heart to God, shall never have any part or portion in God. O Sirs, as ever you would have God for your portion, it highly concerns you to give up your selves to God with highest estimations, and with most vigorous affections, and with utmost indeavours, according to that precious promise, *Isa.* 44. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of* Jacob, *and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and firname himself by the name of* Israel. God stands upon nothing so much as the giving up of your selves to him,

him, nor he is taken with nothing so much as the giving up of your selves to him. I have read of *Æschines*, who seeing his fellow-scholars give great gifts, *viz.* gold, silver, and jewels to his Master *Socrates*, and he being poor, and having nothing else to bestow, he gave him himself, which the Philosopher most kindly accepted, esteeming this present above all those rich and costly presents that his other Scholars had presented to him, and accordingly in love and sweetnesse he carried it towards him: So there is nothing that God accepts, loves, likes, and esteems like the giving up of a mans self unto him; this is a present that God prefers above all the gold, silver, and sparkling jewels in the world. Well Sirs, remember this, Such as are not as willing to say, Lord, we are thine, as they are to say, Lord, thou art ours, such shall never have God for their portion. But

Seneca de Benefic. l. 1.

Fifthly, If you would have God

5.

for your portion, then you muſt take up Chriſt in your arms, and treat with God upon the credit of Chriſt; there is no acquaintance with God, there is no reconciliation to God, there is no union nor communion with God, there is no re-admiſſion into the preſence and favour of God without a Mediator. God out of Chriſt is incomprehenſible, God out of Chriſt is exceeding terrible, an abſolute God is a conſuming fire; and therefore, ſayes *Luther*, *Nolo Deum abſolutum*, Let me have nothing to do with God himſelf. The blood of Chriſt, the blood of the Covenant is that and onely that that can cement, re-unite, and knit God and man together. *Themiſtocles* underſtanding that King *Admitus* was highly diſpleaſed with him, took up his young ſon into his armes, and treated with the father, holding that his Darling in his boſome, and thereby appeaſed the Kings wrath. O Sirs, the King of Kings is offended with you, and upon

Ephe. 2. 15. Heb. 2. 17. Col. 1. 20, 21. Ephes. 1. 6, 7.

Heb. 12. 9.

Plutarch in Vita.

upon the account of your sins he hath a very great controversie with you; Now there is no way under heaven to pacifie his wrath, and turn away his displeasure from you, but by taking up Christ in your armes, and by presenting all your suits in his name. There is no Angel in heaven, nor no Saint on earth, that can, or that dares to interpose between an angry God, and poor sinners; 'tis only Christ, the Prince of peace that can make up a sinners peace with God, *John* 14. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.* There is no way to the Father, but by the meritorious blood of the Son; there are none that can stand between everlasting burnings and us, but Christ. You shall not see my face, except you bring your brother *Benjamin* with you, said *Joseph* to his brethren; so sayes God, Sinners, sinners, you shall not see my face, except you bring Jesus with you; except you

Isa. 9.6.

Isa. 33.14.

Gen. 43.3, 5.

bring Christ in your armes, you shall never see my face with joy, you shall never see my face and live. There is a Writ of Vengeance that is issued out of the Court of Heaven against poor sinners; and except Christ steps in, they will certainly fall under an eternal arrest, and be thrown into everlasting perdition and destruction. But

6. Sixthly, If you would have God for your portion, then you must break your league with sin; you must fall out with sin, if ever you fall in with God; sin and you must be two, or God and you can never be one; there is no propriety to be had in God, except your hearts rise against that which first dis-united and dis-joynted you from God; sin and you must part, or God and you can never meet. You shall as soon make an accommodation between light and darknesse, heaven and hell, noon and midnight, as ever you shall

2 Cor. 6. 14 ult.

be

be able to make an accommodation between God and sinne. So long as sin remains ours, God will be none of ours: No Prince will be one with that Subject that lives in the practice of Treason and Rebellion against him. No Prince will be one with him that hath kill'd his onely son and heir, and that daringly continues to hold up those bloody weapons in his hands wherewith he hath committed that horrid fact. There is no Adulteress that can be so shamelesly impudent, or so vainly confident, as to desire pardon of her jealous husband, or to expect an oneneſſe and a ſweetneſſe with him, whil'ſt ſhe continues to hold her wanton lovers ſtill in her arms, and is fully reſolved to hold on in her wanton dalliances, as in times paſt. O Sirs, God is that Prince that will never admit of peace or union with you,

Pharnaces ſent a Crown to *Cæſar* at the ſame time that he rebelled againſt him, but he returned the Crown, and this meſſage back, *Facem imperata prius*, Let him return to his obedience firſt.

till you ceaſe practiſing of Treaſon againſt him, and till you come to lay down your weapons of Rebellion at his feet; he is that jealous husband that will never take you into an oneneſſe, into a neerneſſe and dearneſſe with himſelf, till you come to abandon all your wanton lovers, and throughly to reſolve againſt all wanton dalliances for time to come. If ever you would have God for your portion, you muſt ſay to all your wanton lovers, and to all thoſe Idols of jealouſie that you have ſet up in your ſouls, as *Ephraim* once ſaid to his, *Get you hence, for what have I any more to do with you,* Hoſ. 14.8. But

7. In my former Treatiſes I have ſpoken very largely about the uſe of

Seventhly and laſtly, If you would have God for your portion, then you muſt wait upon him in the uſe of all holy means; in the uſe of holy meanes God makes the cleareſt, the fulleſt, and the choiceſt diſcoveries of himſelf: in the uſe of holy means poor ſinners

ners come to be acquainted with the excellency of God, and with the neceſſity of having God for their portion; in the uſe of holy means poor ſinners come to underſtand the fulneſſe of God, the goodneſſe of God, the graciouſneſſe of God, the ſweetneſſe of God, and the wonderful freeneſſe, readineſſe, and willingneſſe of God to give himſelf as a portion to all ſuch as ſee their need of him, and that are heartily willing to receive him as their God and portion; and in the uſe of holy means God works in poor ſinners a readineſſe, a forwardneſſe, and a bleſſed willingneſſe to chooſe God for their portion, to cloſe with God for their portion, to imbrace God for their portion, to accept of God for their portion, and to own God for their portion. If this queſtion ſhould be put to all the Saints in heaven, *viz.* How God came to be their portion? they would all anſwer, by waiting upon him in the uſe of all thoſe holy wayes and

holy means, eſpecially in my laſt on *Holineſſe*, and therefore a touch here muſt ſuffice.

and means that he had appointed for that purpoſe; and if the ſame queſtion were put to all the Saints on earth that have God for their portion, they would all give the ſame anſwer. O Sirs, as ever you would have God for your portion, it highly concerns you to wait patiently upon him in the uſe of all holy means; he that is in the uſe of holy means is in the way of obtaining God for his portion: But he that caſts off the uſe of the means, he ſays in effect, I will not have God for my portion, I care not to have God for my portion; let me but have the world for my portion, and let who will take God for their portion.

To prevent miſtakes, before I cloſe up this direction, remember that by the uſe of holy means, I onely mean ſuch means that God himſelf hath appointed, commanded, inſtituted, and ordained. As for thoſe means that are of mens inventing, deviſing, preſcribing, commanding, and ordaining, a man

man may wait till doomſ-day in the uſe of them before ever he will gain God for his portion; & therefore they are rather to be declined, yea, deteſted and abhorred, than any way to be owned, minded, or uſed by any that would have God for their portion. Look, as all the worſhippers of *Baal* got nothing by all their wailing and crying out from morning to night, *O Baal, hear us, O Baal, hear us*; So they that wait upon God in invented and deviſed worſhip will never get any thing by all their waiting; no, though they ſhould wait from morning to evening, and from evening to morning, and cut and launce themſelves till the blood guſh out, as thoſe fooliſh worſhippers of *Baal* did. And therefore as ever you would have God for your portion, be ſure that you wait upon him onely in his own wayes, and in the uſe of his own means. And thus I have done with the uſe and Application of the Point. 1 Kings 18.

So

So that I have now nothing to do, but theſe two things:

Firſt, To anſwer a few Objections that poor ſinners are apt to make againſt their own ſouls, and againſt their enjoying of God for their portion. And

Secondly, To lay down a few Poſitions that may be of ſingular uſe to all ſuch that have God for their portion. I ſhall begin with the Objections.

Object. Methinks I hear ſome poor ſinners ready to object and ſay, O Sir, you have preſt us by many motives to get God for our portion, and we ſtand convinced in ſome meaſure by what you have ſaid, that God is a moſt excellent, tranſcendent, glorious portion; but we very much queſtion whether ever God will beſtow himſelf as a portion upon ſuch great, ſuch grievous, ſuch notorious, and ſuch infamous ſinners as we are?

Now

Now to this Objection I ſhall return theſe anſwers.

Firſt, God is a free agent, and therefore he may give himſelf as a portion to whom he pleaſes; men may do with their own as they pleaſe, and ſo may God do with himſelf as he pleaſes. Look as men may give earthly portions to whom they pleaſe; ſo God may give himſelf as a portion to what ſinners he pleaſes; God is as free to beſtow himſelf upon the greateſt of ſinners, as he is to beſtow himſelf upon the leaſt of ſinners. But, 1.

Secondly, I anſwer, that the Lord hath beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon as great and as grievous ſinners as you are. *Adam* you know fell from the higheſt pinnacle of glory into the greateſt gulf of miſery, and yet God beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon him: And *Manaſſeh* was a ſinner of the greateſt magnitude, his ſins were of a skarlet dye, they reach't as 2. Pſal. 68. 18. Gen. 3. 15. 2 Kings 21.

2 Chron. 33. as high as heaven, and they made his ſoul as black as hell; for Witchcraft, Sorcery, Cruelty, Idolatry, and Blood, he was a none-ſuch; he ſold himſelf to work all manner of wickedneſſe with greedineſſe; he did more wickedly than the very heathen, whom the Lord abhorred; in all his acting he ſeemed to be the firſt-born of Satans ſtrength; and yet the Lord freely beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon him: and ſo, *Ezek. 16. 6,8. When I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted in thine own blood, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood live, yea, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood live. Now when I paſſed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was a time of love, and I ſpread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedneſſe, yea, I ſwore unto thee, and entered into a Covenant with thee, ſaith the Lord God, and thou becameſt mine.* And ſo, *Iſa 46. 12,13. Hearken unto me, ye ſtout-hearted, that are far from righteouſneſſe; I bring near my righteouſneſſe, it ſhall not be far off,*

and

and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion *for* Israel *my glory.* *Solomon*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Mathew*, *Zacheus*, the Gaoler, and the murderers of Christ were all very great and grievous sinners, and yet the Lord bestowed himself as a portion upon them; and so God bestowed himself as a portion upon those monstrous and prodigious sinners that are mentioned in 1 *Cor.* 6, 9, 10, 11. *whose souls were red with guilt, and as black as hell with filth.* God hath been very good to those that have been very bad, and therefore do not despair, O sinner, though thy sins are very great.

I have read a Story concerning a great Rebel that had made a great party against one of the Roman Emperours, and Proclamation being sent abroad, that whoever could bring in the Rebel dead or alive, he should have a great summe of money for his rewards; the Rebel hearing of it, comes, and presenting himself before the Em-

Joh. Bodin. Com. weal.

Emperour, demands the ſum of money propoſed; the Emperour bethinking himſelf, concludes, that if he ſhould put him to death, all the world would be ready to ſay, that he did it to ſave his money; and ſo he freely pardoned the Rebel, and gave him the money. Here now was light in a dark Lanthorn, here was rare mercy and pity in a very Heathen: And ſhall an Heathen do thus, and ſhall not the great God, who is made up of all loves, of all mercies, of all compaſſions, of all goodneſſes, and of all ſweetneſſes, do much more? certainly he will. If the greateſt Rebels, if the greateſt ſinners will but come in whilſt the white Flag of grace and mercy is held forth, they ſhall finde a marveilous readineſſe and forwardneſſe in God, not onely to pardon them, but alſo to beſtow (not onely money, but) himſelf as a portion upon them. The greateſt ſinners ſhould do well to make that great Scripture their greateſt com-

companion, *Pſal.*68.18. *Thou haſt aſcended on high* (ſpeaking of Chriſt) *thou haſt led captivity captive, thou haſt received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious alſo,* (but to what purpoſe hath Chriſt received gifts, ſpiritual gifts, gracious gifts, glorious gifts, for men, for the rebellious? why 'tis) *that the Lord God may dwell amongſt them.* But,

Thirdly, I anſwer, that God hath given out an expreſſe promiſe, that he will make ſuch to be his people which were not his people, *Hoſ.*2.23. *I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy, and I will ſay to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they ſhall ſay, Thou art my God.* In this precious promiſe God hath ingaged himſelf to have a moſt ſweet harmony, and a moſt intimate conjunction and communion with ſuch a people as were not his people. But 3.

Fourthly, I anſwer, that God 4.

gains the greatest glory, by bestowing of himself as a portion upon the greatest sinners. There is nothing that makes so much for the glory of free grace, and for the exaltation of rich mercy, and for the praise of divine goodnesse, and for the honour of infinite fulnesse, as Gods bestowing of himself upon the greatest of sinners. O Sirs, grace appears never so rich, nor never so excellent, nor never so glorious, as when it triumphs over the greatest sins, and when it falls upon the greatest sinners: Grace never shines, nor never sparkles, nor never becomes so exceeding glorious, as it doth when it lights upon the hearts of the greatest sinners. The greatest sinnes do most and best set off the freenesse and the riches of Gods grace: there is nothing that makes heaven and earth to ring and to sound out his praises so much as the fixing of his love upon those that are most unlovely and uncomely, and as the bestowing of himself upon them that

that have given away themſelves from him.

And 'tis further obſervable, that the greateſt ſinners, when once they are converted, do commonly prove the choiceſt Saints, and the rareſt Inſtruments of promoting the honour and glory of God in the world. The *Canaanites* were a wicked and a curſed generation, they were given over to all whoredome, witchcraft, and cruelty, they offered their ſons and daughters to Devils, they were the very worſt of ſinners, they were without God, and without the Covenant, and counted dogs among the *Iſraelites*; and ſuch an one was the *Canaanite* woman that you read of in that *Matth.* 15. 21--29. till the Lord made it the day of his power upon her ſoul; but when the Lord had brought her in to himſelf, ah what a rare Chriſtian did ſhe prove, for wiſdome, zeal, humility, ſelf-denial, love, courage, patience, faith, &c. And ſo *Mary Magdalen* was a notorious Strumpet, a common

They were of the race of curſed *Cain.*

whore, among all the harlots none to *Mary Magdalen*, and ſhe was one out of whom Chriſt cait ſeven Devils; and yet when ſhe was changed and converted, O with what an inflamed love did ſhe love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt! and with what a burning zeal did ſhe follow after the Lord Jeſus! and how abundant was ſhe in her lamenting and mourning after the Lord Jeſus Chriſt! Some report, that after our Saviours reſurrection ſhe ſpent thirty years in weeping for her ſins in *Galba*. And *Paul*, you know, was a very grievous ſinner, but after his converſion, O what a rare, what an eminent, what a glorious inſtrument was he in bringing of ſouls to Chriſt, and in building up of ſouls in Chriſt! O what a noble drudge was he for Chriſt! O how frequent! O how fervent! O how abundant was he in the work of the Lord, &c. And indeed in all ages, the greateſt ſinners when once they have been converted, they

Mark 16 9

Luke 7.

Joh. 20.

2 Cor. 11.

they have commonly proved the choiceſt Saints, and the rareſt Inſtruments in the hand of God for the advancement of his glory, and the carrying on of his work in the world. I might inſtance in *Luther*, and divers others, but that I haſten to a Cloſe: And therefore,

Fifthly, I anſwer, that of all ſinners the greateſt ſinners do undoubtedly ſtand in the greateſt need of having of God for their portion. Look, as they that are moſt wounded ſtand in moſt need of a Surgeon, and as they that are moſt ſick ſtand in moſt need of a Phyſician, and as they that are in moſt danger of robbing, ſtand in moſt need of aſſiſtance; and as they that are in moſt peril of drowning ſtand in moſt need of a boat, and as they that are moſt impoveriſhed ſtand in moſt need of relief, ſo they that are the greateſt ſinners ſtand in moſt need of having of God for their portion, for no tongue can expreſſe, nor no heart can conceive the greatneſſe of that wrath, of

5.

2 Theſſ. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10.

that indignation, of that deſolation, of that deſtruction, and of that damnation that attends and waits upon thoſe great ſinners that have not God for their portion; and therefore the greater ſinner thou art, the greater obligation lies upon thee to get God to be thy God and portion; for till that be done, all thy ſins in their full number, weight, guilt, and aggravating circumſtances will abide upon thy ſoul. But

6. Sixthly and laſtly, I anſwer, that God is a great God, and he loves to do like himſelf. Now there are no works, no actions that are ſo ſuitable to God, and ſo pleaſing to God, and ſo delightful to God, as thoſe that are great; and what greater work, what greater action can the great God do, than to beſtow himſelf as a portion upon the greateſt of ſinners? It was a great work for God to create the world, and it is a great work for God to govern the World, and it will be a great work

work for God to diſſolve the world, and to raiſe the dead; and yet doubtleſſe it is a greater work for the great God freely to beſtow himſelf upon the greateſt ſinners. The love of God is a great love, and the mercies of God are great mercies, and the compaſſions of God are great compaſſions, and accordingly God loves to act; and therefore there is ground for the greateſt ſinners to hope that the Lord may beſtow himſelf as a portion upon them. But

Secondly, Others may object and ſay, hereafter we will look after this portion; for the preſent we are for living in the world, we are for a portion in hand, we are for laying up portions for our ſelves, and providing portions for our poſterity; we are firſt for laying up of earthly treaſures, and when we have done that work to purpoſe, then we will do what we can to obtain this excellent and glorious portion that you have *Object.* 2.

been so long a discoursing on, &c. Now to this Objection, I shall thus answer:

1. First, Thus to act is to run counter-crosse to Christs expresse commands, *Mat.* 6. 33. *But seek ye first the Kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse, and all these things shall be added unto you*: And so *ver.* 19, 20. *Lay not up for your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where theeves break through, and steal; But lay up for your selves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where theeves do not break through nor steal.* And so in that *Joh.* 6. 27. *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which endureth to everlasting life.* O Sirs, to act or run crosse to Gods expresse command (though under pretence of Revelation from God) is as much as a mans life is worth, as you may see in that sad story,

The Greek word προστιθήσεται signifies a casting in as an overplus, as some over-weight, measure, or number.

1 *Kings*

1 *Kings* 13.24. O Sirs, 'tis a dangerous thing to neglect one of his commands, who by another is able to command your bodies into the grave, and your ſouls into hell at his pleaſure: Shall the wife make conſcience of obeying the commands of her husband? and ſhall the child make conſcience of obeying the commands of his father? and ſhall the ſervant make conſcience of obeying the commands of his Lord? and ſhall the ſouldier make conſcience of obeying the commands of his General? and ſhall the ſubject make conſcience of obeying the commands of his Prince (though he be none of his Council?) and will not you make conſcience of obeying his commands that is the Prince of the Kings of the earth, 1 *Rev.*5. But

Secondly, Who but children, mad men, and fools *in Folio*, will pitch upon a leſſe good, when a greater good is offered to them? 2.

what

Children, mad men, and fools will part with a pearl for a pippin.

what madneſſe and folly is it for men to pitch upon bags of counters, when bags of gold are laid before them? or for men to chuſe an hundred pounds *per annum* for life, when rich inheritances and great Lordſhips are freely offered to be made over to them for ever? What were this but *Eſau*-like to prefer a meſſe of pottage before the birth-right? and yet this is the preſent caſe of theſe Objectors. God is that rich, that great, that glorious, and that matchleſſe portion that is held out, and freely offered and tendered in the Goſpel to poor ſinners, and they neglect, ſlight, and reject this bleſſed offer, and fix their choice, their love, their hearts, their affections upon the periſhing vanities of this world. O the folly of ſuch, that at a Feaſt feed upon kickſhawes, and never taſte of thoſe ſubſtantial diſhes that are for nouriſhment! O the madneſſe of ſuch that prefer the fleſh-pots of *Egypt* before the dainties of *Canaan*! Would

nor

not ſuch a Merchant, ſuch a Tradeſman be pointed at as he goes along the ſtreets for a fool, or a mad man, that ſhould neglect ſuch a ſeaſon, ſuch an opportunity, ſuch an advantage, wherein he may be made for ever (as to the world) and all becauſe he is reſolved firſt to ſecure ſuch a bargain of rags, or ſuch a bargain of old ſhooes, which will turn but little to his advantage when he hath bought them? Surely yes: now this is the very caſe of the Objectors, for they neglect the preſent ſeaſons, the preſent opportunities of grace and mercy, and of being made happy for ever, by enjoying of God for their portion, and all becauſe they are reſolved firſt to ſecure the Treaſures, the Rags of this World. Certainly, in the great day of account theſe will be found the greateſt fools that have fool'd away ſuch golden opportunities that were more worth than all the world, and all to ſecure the rags of the world?

But Thirdly,

3. Thirdly and laſtly, How many thouſands are now in hell? how many thouſands have now their part and their portion in that burning lake, which burnes with fire and brimſtone for ever and ever? who thought when they were on earth that after they had laid up goods for many years with the fool in the Goſpel, that then they would look after heavenly treaſures, and ſecure God for their portion; but before they could find time or hearts to ſet about ſo noble work, divine vengeance hath overtaken them, and juſtice hath cut the threed of their lives, and given them their portion among hypocrites. Ah, how many be there that have died in the time of their earthly projects and deſigns, before ever they have ſet about that great work of ſecuring God for their portion; and how many thouſands be there, that God in his juſt judgment hath given up to inſatiable deſires of earthly things, and to a curſed end-

Matth. 7. 22, 26, 27.

Rev. 21. 8.

Luk. 12. 15. to 22.

Phil. 3. 18, 19.

endlesse covetousnesse all their dayes? Some write of the Crocodil, that it alwayes growes, that it hath never done growing; and just so 'tis with the desires of worldly men, they alwayes grow, they have never done growing; now they are for one thousand, then for ten, then for twenty, then for fourty, then for an hundred thousand; now they are for this Lordship, and then they are for that; now they are for this good bargain, and then they are for that; their hearts grow every day fuller and fuller with new desires of further and greater measures of earthly things; they please themselves with golden dreams, till they awake with everlasting flames about their ears, and then they fall a cursing themselves that they have made gold their confidence, and that they have neglected those golden seasons and opportunities wherein they might have secured God for their portion. But

Thirdly,

Object. 3. Thirdly, Others may object and say, we would fain have God for our portion, and we would willingly apply our selves to all those wayes and means whereby we might obtain the Lord to be our portion; but we are poor unworthy wretches, surely the Lord will never bestow himself as a portion upon such miserable unworthy ones as we are; we are worthy of death, we are worthy of wrath, we are worthy of hell, we are worthy of damnation, but we are no wayes worthy of having God for our portion. Did ever the Lord cast an eye of love upon such unlovely, and such unworthy sinners, Lepers, as we are? &c.

Now to this Objection I shall return these answers:

1. First, Though you have no merits, yet God is rich, and abundant in mercy; your sins, your unworthinesse can but reach as high as heaven, but the mercies of God reach

2 Cor. 4. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 3.

reach above the heavens, *Pſal.* 103. 11. *For as the Heaven is high above the earth, ſo great is his mercy toward them that fear him*: Pſal. 108. 4. *For thy mercy is great above the heavens, and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds*: The higheſt compariſons which the world will afford are not ſufficient to expreſſe the greatneſſe of Gods mercy to poor ſinners: Though the heavens are exceeding high above the earth, yet the mercies of God to his poor people are above the heavens. But

Secondly, I anſwer, that the Lord hath never beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon any yet, but unworthy ones; *David* was as unworthy as *Saul*, and *Job* as *Joab*, and *Peter* as *Judas*, and *Paul* as *Simon Magus*, and the Publicans and Harlots that entered into the Kingdome of heaven were as unworthy as the Publicans and Harlots that were ſhut out of the Kingdome of heaven; and the thief that went to paradiſe was as unworthy 2. Mat. 21. 31, 32.

worthy as the thief that went to hell: All the Saints in heaven, and all the Saints on earth are ready with one joynt conſent to declare, that they were as unworthy as the moſt unworthieſt, when God firſt beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon them. This Objection, I am unworthy, is a very unworthy Objection, and therefore away with it. But

3. Thirdly, I anſwer, that God hath no where in all the Scripture required any perſonal worthineſſe to be in the creature, before he will beſtow himſelf upon the creature. O Sirs, it never came into the thoughts of God, it never entered into the heart of God to require of men, that they ſhould be firſt worthy of his love, before they ſhould enjoy his love; and that they ſhould be firſt worthy of his mercy, before they ſhould taſt of his mercy; and that they ſhould be firſt worthy of his goodneſſe, before they ſhould be partakers of his

his goodneſſe; and that they ſhould be firſt worthy of himſelf, before he would beſtow himſelf as a portion upon them. If we ſhould never enjoy God for our portion till we are worthy to enjoy him for our portion, we ſhould never enjoy him. If a man had as many eyes as *Argus* to ſearch into the Scripture, and as many hands as *Briareus* to turn over the leaves of Scripture, yet he would never be able to find out one Text, one line, yea, one word, wherein God requires a perſonal worthineſſe in the creature, before he gives away himſelf to the creature: Should God ſtand upon a perſonal worthineſſe to be in the creature, before he would look upon the creature, or before he would let out his love to the creature, or before he would extend mercy or pity to the creature, or before he would in a Covenant of free grace give himſelf to the creature, no ſinner could be ſaved, man would be for ever undone, and it had been good

for him that he had never been born. But,

4. Fourthly, I anſwer, 'tis not mens unworthineſſe, but mens unwillingneſſe that hinders them from having God to be their portion; though moſt men pretend their unworthineſſe, yet there is in them a ſecret unwillingneſſe to have God for their God. When they look upon God, as a gracious God, then they are willing to have him to be their God; but when they look upon God as an holy God, then their hearts fly back: when they look upon God as a merciful God, and as a bountiful God, O then they wiſh that he were their God; but when they look upon God as a commanding God; and as a ruling and an over-ruling God, O then their hearts do ſecretly riſe againſt God; there is a real unwillingneſſe in the hearts of ſinners, in all reſpects, to cloſe with God, and to have God to be their God. *Who hath beleeved our report?*

Iſa. 53. 1.

port? and to whom is the arme of the Lord revealed? I have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts. A people that provoke me to anger continually to my face. How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity? and the ſcorners delight in ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you. Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof. I alſo will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh, &c. For thus ſaith the Lord God, the holy One of Iſrael, in returning and reſt ſhall ye be ſaved, in quietneſſe and in confidence ſhall be your ſtrength, and ye would not. O Sirs, men ſhall be damn'd at laſt, not for cannots, but for will nots; no man ſhall be damned becauſe he could not do better, but becauſe he would not do better; if there

Ch.65.2,3.

Prov.1.22, 23,24,25, 26.

Iſa.30.15.

Matth. 23 37. Luk.13.34.

John 40. were no will, there would be no hell: At laſt ſinners will finde this to be their greateſt hell, that they have wilfully deſtroyed themſelves; this is that which will damn with a witneſſe, and this will be that never dying worm; I might have had Chriſt and grace, but I would not; I might have been ſanctified and ſaved, but I would not; I might have been holy and happy, but I would not; life and death hath been often ſet before me, and I have choſen death rather than life; heaven and hell hath been often ſet before me, and I have choſen hell rather than heaven; glory and miſery hath been often ſet before me, and I have choſen miſery rather than glory; and therefore 'tis but juſt that I ſhould be miſerable to all eternity. No man, no Devil, can undo thee, O ſinner, without thy ſelf; no man can be undone in both worlds, but by himſelf: No man ſhall be damned for his unworthineſſe, but

Deut. 30. 15, 19.

for

for his unwillingneſſe; and therefore never plead this Objection more. But,

Fifthly and laſtly, I anſwer, that if you will not ſeek after the Lord to be your portion, till you are worthy to enjoy him as your portion, then you will never ſeek after him, then you will never enjoy him for your God and portion: perſonal worthineſſe is no flower that growes in Natures garden, no man is born with a worthineſſe in his heart, as he is born with a tongue in his mouth; 'tis not the full, but the empty, 'tis not the rich, but the poor in ſpirit; 'tis not the righteous, but the ſinner; 'tis not the worthy, but the unworthy ſoul that is the proper object of mercy and pity: The poor Publican that cried out, *Lord, be merciful to me a ſinner*, went home juſtified, when the thank-God Phariſee returned as proud as he came. The *Centurion* when he came to Chriſt, ſped well, notwithſtanding his perſonal unworthineſs. 5. Luk.18.10.-15. Matth.8.

Luk. 15. u--ult.

And the prodigal ſon ſped well when he returned to his Father, notwithſtanding his perſonal unworthineſs; for he was readily accepted, greatly pitied, ſweetly imbraced, courteouſly received, & very joyfully and nobly entertained, witneſſe the beſt robe that was put upon his back, and the gold ring that was put on his finger, and the ſhoes that were put on his feet, and the fatted calfe that was killed to make the company merry. O Sirs, if in the face of all your unworthineſſe you will go to God, and tell him that you are ſinners, that you are vile ſinners, that you are wretched ſinners, that you are very great ſinners, yea, that you are the greateſt of ſinners, and that you have deſerved a thouſand deaths, a thouſand hells, a thouſand deſtructions, and a thouſand damnations, and earneſtly beſeech him to look upon you, and to beſtow himſelf on you (though not for your worthineſſe ſake, yet) for his Names ſake, for his mercies ſake,

sake, for his promise sake, for his Covenants sake, for his Oath sake, and for his Sons sake; Certainly, if you shall thus plead with God, all the Angels in heaven, and all the men on earth cannot tell to the contrary, but that you may speed as well as ever the *Centurion*, or the Prodigal did. I have taken the more pains to answer this Objection, that so it may never have a resurrection more in any of your hearts, into whose hands this Treatise may fall.

I know other Objections might be raised, but because I have spoken largely to such in my former writings. I shall pass on to the last thing proposed, and that is to lay down some Positions that may (by the blessing of God) be of singular use to the Christian Reader.

As first, That 'tis one thing for a man to have God for his portion, and 'tis another thing for a man to have an assurance in his own soul that God is his portion; there are many that have God for their portion,

First Position. *Moses* his face did shine, and yet he did not see it.

tion, who yetare full of fears and doubts, that God is not their portion: Thus it was with *Asaph* in that 77 *Psalm*; & thus itwas with *Heman* in that 88 *Psalm*; and thus it is with very many Christians in these dayes. Sometimes God exercises his children with such changeable and such terrible dispensations as raises many fears and doubts in them about their interest and propriety in; God and sometimes their secret indulging of some bosome Idol, their entertainment of some predominant lust, raises strange fears and jealousies in their souls about their interest in God; and sometimes their not closing with the Lord so closely, so fully, so faithfully, so universally, and so sincerely as they should, without any secret reservation, raises many doubts and questions in them, whether God be their portion, or no. The graces of many Christians are so weak, and their corruptions are so strong, and Satan is so busie with them, and their du-

duties and performances are ſo weak, ſo flat, ſo dull, ſo ſapleſſe, ſo liveleſſe, ſo fruitleſſe, and ſo inconſtant, that they are ready at every turn to ſay, if God be our God, why is it thus with us? if God be our portion, why are our hearts in no better a frame? why have our duties no more ſpirit, life, and fire in them. Look, as the Sun may ſhine, and yet I not ſee it; and as the husband may be in the houſe, and yet the wife not know it; and as the child may have a very great portion, a very fair eſtate ſetled upon him, and yet he not underſtand it; ſo a Chriſtian may have God for his portion, and yet for the preſent he may not ſee it, nor know it, nor underſtand it, 1 *John* 5. 13. *Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* Theſe precious ſouls had God and Chriſt for their portion, and they did believe, and they had

eternal

Ephe. 2.6.

eternal life in the ſeeds and beginnings of it, and in the promiſe, and in Chriſt their Head, who as a publick perſon had taken poſſeſſion ot it in their ſteads, and yet they had not the aſſurance of theſe things in their own ſouls. Look, as the babe that hath paſt the pangs of the firſt birth, doth not preſently cry out, my father, my father; ſo the babe of grace, the new-born Chriſtian doth not preſently cry out, my God, my God; 'tis one mercy for God to be my God, and 'tis another mercy for God to tell me, that he is my God; 'tis one act of grace for God to be my portion, and 'tis another act of grace for God to tell me, that he is my portion. Look, as fire may be hid under aſhes for a time, and as bits of gold may be hid in an heap of duſt for a time, and as ſtars may be hid in a dark night for a time, and as a pearl may be hid in a puddle for a time; ſo God may be a mans portion, and yet this may be hid from him for a time.

The

Second Poſition.

The ſecond Poſition is this, That it is one thing for a man to have God for his portion, and another thing for a man clearly and convincingly to make it out to himſelf or others, that God is his portion: Doubtleſſe there are many thouſands that have God for their portion, who yet, if you would give them a thouſand worlds, are not able to make it out to their own or others ſatisfaction, that God is their portion. Moſt Chriſtians attain to but ſmall meaſures of grace, but little meaſures of grace: Now ſmall things, little things are hardly diſcerned, they are hardly made out. A little faith is next to no faith, and a little love is next to no love, and a little repentance is next to no repentance, and a little zeal is next to no zeal, and a little hope is next to no hope, and a little holineſſe is next

God ſometimes layes ſuch a Law of reſtraint upon the noble faculties of men and women, that they cannot uſe them at ſometimes as they do at others, as you may clearly ſee by comparing of theſe Scriptures together, *Luke* 24.14,15,16, &c. *Acts* 22.9. *Gen.*21,16,19. *John* 20. 14,15, &c.

next to no holinesse, and a little communion with God is next to no communion with God, and a little conformity to God is next to no conformity to God. Now where there is but a little grace, there it is very difficult for a man to make out the truth of his grace, and so by consequence to make out the truth of his interest and propriety in the God of grace: 'Tis not grace in truth, but grace in strength that will inable a man to make it out to himself, and to make it out to others, that God is his portion: It is not grace in its sincerity, but grace in its sublimity, in its high and eminent actings, that will inable a man to make it out to himself and others, that God is indeed his God. Besides, many precious hearts have such weak heads, and such bad Logick, and such shallow natural parts, that they are not able rationally nor divinely to argue the case with their own souls, nor to make an improvement of those rules, helps, wayes,

wayes, and means, whereby they might be inabled to make it out to themſelves and others, that God is their portion. Look, as many perſons have often a good title to ſuch and ſuch lands, and to ſuch and ſuch eſtates and inheritances, though they are not able for the preſent to clear up their title either to themſelves or others; ſo many of the dear children of God have a good title to God, and a real intereſt and propriety in God, and yet for the preſent they are not able to clear up their title to God, nor to clear up their intereſt and propriety in God, either to themſelves or others. And this is ſo great a truth, that all the faithful Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt that deal with poor ſouls, & that are converſant about ſouls, are ready from their daily experience to avouch it before all the world. He that ſhall ſay, that ſuch have not God for their portion, that cannot make out God to be their portion, will certainly condemn the generation of the juſt.

The

Third Position.

Isa. 55.1,2. Joh.7.37, 38.

The third Position is this, That where there is an hearty willingnesse in any man to accept of God to be his God, to own God for his God, and to close with God as his God, there God is certainly that mans God. If there be a cordial willingnesse in you to take God to be your God, then without all peradventure God is your God. A sincere willingnesse to accept of God to be your God is accepted of God, and is sufficient to enter into a gracious Covenant with God. O Sirs, a sincere willingnesse to accept of God to be your God flowes from nothing below the good will and pleasure of God; no power below that glorious power that made the world, and that raised Christ from the grave, is able to raise a sincere, an hearty willingnesse in man to accept of God to be his God, and to take God for his God, *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willing* (or willingnesses in the abstract, and in the plural number,) *in the day of thy power,*

power, in the beauties of holineſſe.
There is no power below the power of the Lord of Hoſts that can raiſe up a willingneſſe in the hearts of ſinners: 'tis not in the power of all the Angels in heaven, nor of all the men on earth to beget a ſincere willingneſſe in the heart of man to accept of God to be his God; this is work that can only be effected by an omnipotent hand. Though an Emperour may force a woman to marry him that is his ſlave, becauſe ſhe is his purchaſe, yet he cannot by all his power force her will; he may force her body to the action, but he cannot force her will to the action. The will is alwayes free, and cannot be forced, but God is that great Emperour that hath not onely a power to marry the ſoul (which he hath redeemed from being Satans bond-ſlave) but alſo a power to make the ſoul that is unready ready, and that is unwilling willing to marry him, and to beſtow it ſelf freely upon him. If there be

be in thee, O man, O woman, a ſincere willingneſſe to take God upon his own terms to be thy God (that is, to take him as an holy God, and as a ruling God, and as a commanding God in one thing as well as another) then he is certainly thy God, *Rev.* 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come; and let him that heareth ſay, come; and let him that is athirſt, come; and whoſoever will let him take the water of life freely.*

Fourth Poſition.

The fourth Poſition is this, That it may ſo fall out, that ſuch a Chriſtian that hath God for his portion, that hath an intereſt and a propriety in God, may loſe the ſight, the ſenſe, the feeling and the evidence of his intereſt and propriety in God; and this is evident by comparing the Scriptures in the Margin together. Doubtleſſe it is very rare to find a Chriſtian that hath had the knowledge, and experience, and evidence of his intereſt and propriety in God, but that

Pſal. 30. 6, 7. Pſal. 51. 13. Joh. 24. Ch. 16. 9. & Ch. 19. 10, 11.

that

that Chriſtian alſo hath experienced what it is to have his intereſt and propriety in God clouded and darkned. Such Chriſtians that have experienced what the warm beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſſe means, have likewiſe experienced what it is to have their Sun ſet in a Cloud; and this truth I might make good, by producing of a cloud of witneſſes both from among the Martyrs, and from among the Saints in all Ages. But what do I talk of a cloud of witneſſes, when the tears that daily drop from many of your eyes, and the ſad complaints, and ſighs, and groans of many of your ſouls do ſufficiently evidence this ſad truth. And therefore let no man conclude, that God is not his God, becauſe he hath loſt the ſight and ſenſe of his intereſt and propriety in God; let no man ſay, that God is not his portion, becauſe he hath loſt thoſe evidences (at the preſent) by which he hath formerly proved God to be his portion.

And Ch. 30. 20. Pſal. 77. Pſal. 88. Iſa. 8. 17. Lam. 3. 18.

Though a man should lose his Writings and Evidences that he hath to shew for such or such an Estate, yet his Writings and Evidences being inrolled in a Court of Record, his Estate remains good, and his Title is still good in law; and therefore there is no reason why such a man should sit down, and wring his hands, and cry out, I am undone, I am undone: so though a Christian should lose his Writings, his Evidences that once he had to shew, that once he had to prove God to be his God and portion, and that he had a real intereſt and propriety in God, yet his Writings, his Evidences being inrolled in the Court of Heaven, his title to God, his intereſt in God remains good; and therefore there is no reason why such a person should sit down dejected, and wring his hands, and cry out, O I am undone, I am for ever undone.

Fifth Position.

The fifth Position is this, That such that have not (for the present)

ſent) God for their portion, ought not peremptorily to conclude, that they ſhall never have God for their portion; ſuch a perſon that cannot yet truly ſay, that the Lord is his portion ought not to deſpair of ever having of God for his portion. The time of a mans life is but a day, and God may beſtow himſelf as a portion upon man in what hour of that day he pleaſes. In the Parable he beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon ſome at the firſt hour, upon others at the third hour, upon others at the ſixth hour, upon others at the ninth hour, and upon others at the eleventh hour: God is a free Agent, and may beſtow himſelf upon whom he pleaſes, and as he pleaſes, and when he pleaſes. There is no ſinner, no not the greateſt ſinner living under the Goſpel, that can infallibly determine, that God will never be his God; no ſinner can conclude that God hath peremptorily and abſolutely excluded him from mercy, and ſhut

Matth. 20. 1.-17.

We except ſuch that hath committed the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt

him out among thoſe that he is reſolved never to beſtow himſelf upon. For,

1. God never made any ſinner one of his Privy Councel.

2. In the Goſpel of grace God hath revealed no ſuch thing.

3. Secret things belong only to the Lord, *Deut.*29.29.

4. God hath beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon as great ſinners as any they are that yet have not God for their portion.

5. All the Angels in heaven, and all the men on earth cannot tell to the contrary, but that God may have thoughts of mercy towards thee, and that thy lot may fall within the purpoſe of his grace, and that he may beſtow himſelf as a portion upon thee before thou art cut off from the land of the living. Although a ſinner may certainly know at the preſent that God is not his God, that God is not his portion, yet he doth not certainly know that God will never be his God, that God will never

never be his portion; and therefore no ſinner may peremptorily conclude, that God will never be his God, becauſe for the preſent he cannot, he dares not ſay, he is his God.

God gave himſelf as a portion to *Abraham* when he was old, when he was a white-headed ſinner. And *Manaſſeh* was old when he was converted and changed, and when God beſtowed himſelf upon him. And *Zacheus* and *Nicodemus* were called and converted in their old age, when there were but a few ſteps between them and the grave, between them & eternity, between them and everlaſting burnings, then the Lord graciouſly revealed himſelf, and beſtowed himſelf as a portion upon them. And if we believe *Tertullian*, *Paul* wanted not a prediction of the Holy Ghoſt in that Prophetick bleſſing of dying *Jacob* to his youngeſt ſon, *Gen.* 49. 27. Benjamin *ſhall ravine as a wolf; in the morning he ſhall devour the prey,*

Gen. 12. 4.

2 Chron. 33. 1, 12, 13, 14.

Adu. Marcion. l. 5.

and at night he ſhall divide the ſpoil. *Paul* was of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, in the morning, the fore-part of his age, worrying and devouring the flock of Chriſt, perſecuting of the Church; and in the evening, the declenſion of his life, dividing the Word, a Doctor of the Nations. And *Dionyſius* tells us, that *Mary Magdalen* that was ſo looſe and diſſolute in her youth, being converted in her old age, ſhe ſequeſtred her ſelf from all worldly pleaſures, and lived a moſt ſolitary life in the mountains of *Balma*, where ſhe ſpent full thirty years in meditation, faſting, and prayer. And old godly *Similes* ſaid, that he had been in the world ſixty years, but had lived but ſeven, counting his life, not from his firſt birth, but from his new birth. And *Auguſtine* repented that he had began to ſeek, ſerve, and love God no ſooner. By all theſe inſtances 'tis moſt evident, that God may beſtow himſelf as a portion upon ſinners, upon very great ſinners, yea,

See my Apples of Gold, *page* 352. 353, 354. two more famous Stories of ſuch that were converted in their old age.

Soliloq. c. 33.

yea, upon the greateſt of ſinners, and that at laſt caſt, when they are ſtricken in years, and when they are even ready to go out of this world; and therefore let no man deſpair of having of God for his portion, though for the preſent his ſoul cannot ſay, the Lord is my portion.

O Sirs, Deſpair is a ſin, a very hainous ſin, yea, 'tis that ſin that damns with a witneſs; deſpairing *Judas* periſhed, and was damned, when as the very murderers of Chriſt believing on Chriſt were ſaved. Deſpair thruſts God from his mercy-ſeat, it throws diſgrace upon the throne of grace, it gives the lye to all the precious promiſes, it caſts reproach upon the nature of God, it tramples under feet the blood of the Covenant, it cuts the throat of faith, hope, and repentance, it renders all the means of grace uſeleſſe and fruitleſſe, it imbitters all a mans comforts, it gives a ſting to all a mans troubles,

Acts 2.

Roger Biſhop of *Salisbury* in King *Stephens* dayes was ſo troubled, that he could not live, and durſt not die, &c.

it proclaims Satan a Conquerour, it raiſes a hell in the conſcience, it makes a man a *Magor-miſſabib*, a terrour to himſelf, and an aſtoniſhment to others. In that 7 of *Daniel* there is mention made of four Beaſts; the firſt a Lion, the ſecond a Bear, the third a Leopard, but the fourth without diſtinction either of kind, or ſex, or name, is ſaid to be very fearful, and terrible, and ſtrong; and ſuch a thing as this fourth beaſt was is Deſperation, as all have found that ever have been under it; deſperation is a complicated ſin, 'tis a mother-ſin, 'tis a breeding ſin, 'tis the complement of all ſins; and therefore above all take heed of this ſin. O Sirs, as you love your ſouls, and as you would be happy to all eternity, do not deſpair, nor do not be peremptory in your concluſions, that God will never be your portion, becauſe for the preſent he is not your portion: remember the gracious invitations of God, and remember the glorious riches of mercy,

mercy, and remember the overflowings of infinite grace, and then despond and despair if thou canst.

The sixt and last Position is this, that such is the love, care, goodnesse & kindnes of God to his people, that few or none of them die without some assurance that God is their portion, & that they have an interest & propriety in him. That here and there a particular Christian (in cases not ordinary) may die doubting, and ascend to heaven in a cloud, as Christ did, will, I suppose, be readily granted; and that the generality of Christians shall first or last, more or less, mediately or immediately, have some comfortable assurance, that God is their God, and that he is their portion, and that they have a real interest and propriety in him, may I suppose be thus evinced. Sixth Position. Acts 1. 9.

First, Several precious promises that are scattered up and down in the Scripture seems to speak out such 1.

ſuch a thing as this is; take theſe for a taſte, *Pſal.* 9. 18. *For the needy ſhall not alwayes be forgotten: the expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh for ever.* Pſal. 22. 26. *The meek ſhall eat and be ſatisfied, they ſhall praiſe the Lord that ſeek him, your heart ſhall live for ever.* Pſal. 84. 11. *For the Lord God is a Sun and a Shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* Hoſ. 2. 23. *And I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy, and I will ſay to them which were not my people, thou art my people; and they ſhall ſay, Thou art my God.* Pſal. 5. 12. *For thou, Lord, wilt bleſs the righteous, with favour wilt thou compaſſe him, as a ſhield.* John 14. 21, 23. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me ſhall be loved of my father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf to him. If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

Ponder upon that of Ezek. 34 30, 31.

Se-

Secondly, The common experiences of the Saints both in the Old and New Teſtament doth evidence as much, *Solomons Song* 2. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his.* Chap. 6. 3. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine:* And Chap. 7. 10. *I am my beloveds, and his deſire is towards me.* *Iſa.* 63. 16. *Doubtleſſe thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from everlaſting.* Iſa. 64. 8, 9. *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, behold, ſee, we beſeech thee, we are all thy people.* Jer. 3. 22, 23. *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Truly in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of* Iſrael. Iſa. 25. 9, *And it ſhall be ſaid in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us.* I might produce a cloud of witneſſes from among the Patriarchs and Prophets, further to evince this truth; but enough is as good as a Feaſt. 2.

And

And as the Church of God in the Old Teſtament, ſo the Church of God in the New Teſtament attained to the ſame aſſurance. The believers in *Corinth* were ſealed, and had the earneſt of the Spirit in their hearts, 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. *Who hath alſo ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts.* And Chap. 5. 1, 5. *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heauens. Now he that hath wrought us for the ſelf-ſame thing is God, who alſo hath given us the earneſt of the Spirit.* And ſo the believing *Epheſians* had the like, *Epheſ.* 1, 13. *In whom, after ye believed ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of Promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance.* And ſo, Chap. 4. 30. *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are ſealed unto the day of redemption.* And the believing *Theſſalonians* had the ſame, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 4, 5. *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our Goſpel came not unto you in word onely, but alſo in*

power,

power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance. I might give you many particular inſtances out of the New Teſtament to confirm this truth, but theſe general Inſtances are more convincing and ſatisfying.

Thirdly, If God ſhould not firſt or laſt, ſooner or later, mediately or immediately give his people ſome comfortable aſſurance, that he is their portion, and that they have a real intereſt and propriety in him, the ſpirits, the ſouls of his people would certainly faint and fail; but this God will never ſuffer, this God by promiſe hath engaged himſelf to prevent, as you may ſee in that *Iſa.* 57. 16, 18, 19. *For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wrath; for the Spirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made. I have ſeen his wayes, and will heal him: I will lead him alſo, and reſtore comforts unto him, and to his mourners: I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace to him that is afar* 3.

afar off, and to him that is neer, ſaith the Lord, and I will heal him. Now ſeeing that God hath ſo graciouſly undertaken for his people, that their ſpirits ſhall not faint nor fail, there is no doubt but that ſooner or later, more or leſſe, God will aſſure his people that he is their portion, and that they have a real intereſt and propriety in him.

4. Fourthly, The Lords Supper is a ſealing Ordinance, and was ordained, inſtituted, and appointed for that very purpoſe and to that very end, *viz.* to ſeal up the believers propriety in God, and to aſſure him of his intereſt in God, in Chriſt, in the everlaſting Covenant, and in all the benefits of Chriſts death, to wit, the favour of God, reconciliation, redemption, and the remiſſion of ſins. Now how can it poſſibly be imagined, that ſo glorious an Ordinance ſhould be inſtituted to ſo great and ſo glorious an end as to aſſure believers of their intereſt and

Matth. 26. 26,27,28. 1 Cor. 11. 23,24. Rom. 4.11.

and propriety in God, and yet this end ſhould never be effected in them all their dayes, for whoſe ſake the Ordinance was inſtituted and appointed. Certainly God never appointed any Ordinance to accompliſh any end, but firſt or laſt that Ordinance did accompliſh that end, for which it was appointed and inſtituted. *Cyprian* ſhews how the Martyrs in the primitive Church when they were to appear before the cruel perſecuting Tyrants, were wont to receive the Lords Supper, and thereby they were ſo aſſured of their intereſt and propriety in God, and ſo fired with zeal and fervour, and fill'd with faith and fortitude, &c. that they made nothing of the greateſt torments that thoſe bloody Tyrants could inflict upon them. And ſaith *Chryſoſtome*, by the Sacrament of the Lords Supper we are ſo armed againſt Satans temptations, that he fleeth from us, as if we were ſo many Lions that ſpet fire.

Iſa. 55. 10, 11. Ch. 45. 23.

Cy. l. 4. Ep. 6. The ſame *Auguſtine* reports, *Aug. in Joh Tract. 27.*

The

The Jews in the celebration of the Paſſeover did ſing the 113. Pſalm, with the five following Pſalms, which they called the great *Hallelujah*, and it was always after that cup of wine which they called, The cup of praiſe; and thus it ſhould be with the Saints; at all times, upon all occaſions, in all places they ſhould ſing *Hallelujahs* to God: O but when they are at the Lords Supper, then they ſhould ſing the great *Hallelujah*; but how they will be ever able to ſing this great *Hallelujah*, except firſt or laſt, more or leſſe, God gives them ſome aſſurance of their intereſt and propriety in himſelf, I cannot for my life diſcern. But

5. Fifthly, There is in all believers the choice and precious ſprings of aſſurance, as

1. Union and communion with the Father and the Son, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip with us, and truly our fellowſhip*

ſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt. Now that union that is between the foundation and the building, the head and the members, the husband and the wife, the father and the child, the ſubject and the Prince, the body and the ſoul, is nothing ſo neer an union as that which is between a believer and God. Beſides, that union that a Chriſtian hath with God is an honourable union, and it is an inſeparable union, it is an invincible union, and it is an everlaſting union. Now how it is poſſible for a man to have ſuch a neer and ſuch a glorious union and fellowſhip with God from the day of his converſion to the day of his deſolution, and yet never come to any aſſurance of his intereſt and propriety in God, is a thing not eaſily imaginable. 1 Cor. 6. 16, 17.

2. Precious faith is another ſpring of aſſurance, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not ſeen ye love, in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice*

joyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Now this spring is in all the Saints, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. The faith of expectance will in time rise up into a faith of reliance, and the faith of reliance will in time advance it self into a faith of assurance.

3. Hope is another spring of assurance, *Coloss.* 1. 27. *Christ in you, the hope of glory.* Heb. 6. 19. *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the vail.*

4. A good conscience is another spring of assurance, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

5. Real love to the Saints is another spring of assurance, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14.

6. And lastly, the Spirit of God is another spring of assurance, *Rom.* 8. Now that a Christian should have all these choice springs of assurance in his soul, from his new birth, to the day of his death, and yet in all that time never come to assurance of his interest and propriety in God, is a thing, I had

al-

almost said, beyond all belief. But

Sixthly, There is nothing in all the world, that the hearts of the Saints are more frequently, more fervently, and more abundantly carried out after in all their prayers and supplications, than this, That God would tell them that he is their portion, and that he would clear up their interest and propriety in himself; the constant language of their souls is this, Lord, do but tell us that thou art our portion, and then bestow earthly portions upon whom thou pleasest; do but clear up our interest and propriety in thy self, and then we shall say, Our lot is fallen in a pleasant place, and verily we have a goodly heritage. Believers know, that assurance that God is their portion, and that they have an interest and propriety in him, will ease them of all their sinful cares, fears, terrours, horrours, jealousies, suspitions, and sad ap- 6. Psa. 4. 6, 7. Psal. 16. 5, 6.

prehenſions, which makes their lives a very hell; They know that aſſurance of their intereſt and propriety in God, will make every bitter ſweet, and every ſweet more ſweet, it will turn a Wilderneſſe into a Paradiſe, an Egypt into a *Canaan*; They know that aſſurance that God is theirs will raiſe the trueſt comforts, the pureſt comforts, the greateſt comforts, the ſureſt comforts, the ſtrongeſt comforts, the rareſt comforts, the ſweeteſt comforts, and the moſt laſting comforts in their ſouls. They know that aſſurance of their intereſt in God will fit them for the higheſt duties in Chriſtianity, and for the hardeſt duties in Chriſtianity, and for the coſtlieſt duties in Chriſtianity, & for the moſt neglected, ſcorned, and deſpiſed duties in Chriſtianity; They know that aſſurance of their propriety in God will moſt quicken their graces, and act their graces, and raiſe their graces, and ſtrengthen their graces, and brighten their graces, and put

Iſa. 40. 1, 2.

a

a luſtre and a beauty upon their graces; They know that aſſurance of their intereſt in God will wonderfully weaken ſin, and effectually crucifie their hearts to the world, and ſweetly moderate their affections to their neereſt and deareſt relations, and powerfully arm them both againſt the worlds oppoſitions, & Satans temptations.

To conclude, They know that aſſurance of their propriety in God will make death more deſirable than terrible, yea, it will make the thoughts of death ſweet, and the approaches of death eaſie, and all the warnings of death pleaſant to their ſouls; and therefore they follow God hard day and night, with ſtrong cries, prayers, tears, ſighs, and groans, that he would make it evident to them, that he is their portion, and that he would clear up their intereſt and propriety in him. Now how can any man that is in his wits imagine, that God ſhould alwayes turn a deaf ear to the prayers of his peo-

Rom: 8. 26, 27.

ple in this thing eſpecially, conſidering that their prayers, cries, tears, ſighs, and groans are but the products of his own Spirit in them; and conſidering likewiſe the ſeveral promiſes, whereby he hath ingaged himſelf to anſwer to the prayers of his people. I might tire both you and my ſelf in turning to thoſe particular promiſes, but that I am reſolved againſt, and therefore take that for all, *Joh.* 16. 23, 24. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Ask and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full.* This double aſſeveration *Verily, verily,* is never uſed, but in matters of greateſt weight and importance; and this gemination *Verily, verily,* is a vehement confirmation of the truth of what Chriſt ſpeaks. Now from this gracious promiſe I may ſafely and clearly infer, That if God the Father will give to believers whatſoever they aſk in the name of Chriſt, then certainly, at firſt or laſt,

last, sooner or later, he will give them assurance that he is their portion, and that they have an undoubted interest and propriety in him; for this is one of the grand requests, that they are still a putting up in the name of Christ, and upon the grant of this request depends the fulnesse of a Christians joy. But

Seventhly and lastly, If God should not sooner or later, more or lesse, assure his people that he is their portion, & that they have an interest & a propriety in him then, he would be a very great loser(if I may so speak)he would lose many praises, and many thanksgivings, he would lose much of that love, of that honour, and of that delight, and of that admiration, which otherwise he might have from among his children. And it is very observable, that of all the duties of Religion there are none that are prest so closely, so frequently, and so strongly upon

I might produce above a hundred Scriptures to evidence this.

Chriſtians, as thoſe of praiſing of God, and rejoycing in God, &c. as all know that know any thing of the Scripture. Now how it will ſtand with the holineſſe of God, and with the wiſdome of God, and with the care of God to be ſo great a loſer in the very things which he hath ſo roundly and earneſtly preſt upon his people, when as by one ſweet word of his mouth he might ſo eaſily and ſo happily prevent it, I cannot eaſily diſcern. All believers know, that there is no ſuch ready, no ſuch effectual way under heaven to draw out their love, their joy, their delight, their praiſes, and their thankſgivings to God, as Gods aſſuring of them that he is their portion, and that they have an unqueſtionable intereſt and propriety in him. Certainly, that God that loves the praiſes of his people, and that diſlights in the rejoycings of his people, and that is ſo infinitely pleaſed with the thankſgivings of his people, that God will not alwayes hide

hide himſelf from his people, that God will ſooner or later ſo manifeſt himſelf to his people, that they ſhall be able to ſee their intereſt and propriety in God, and rejoycingly to ſay, The Lord is our portion.

Now, O you that are the people of the Lord, and that to this very day do lie under many fears and doubts about your intereſt and propriety in God, be not diſcouraged, do not hang down the head, do not deſpond, do not deſpair, for certainly ſooner or later God will aſſure you, that he is your portion, and that you have an intereſt and a propriety in him.

FINIS.

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If

L

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M

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O

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P

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greatest portion *of all* portions. p. 11. *to* p. 19.
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S

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T

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V

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W

Of Waiting. *A man that would have God for his portion must wait upon him in the use of all holy means.* p. 392, 393, 394, 395, 396.

Of Want. *Such as have God for their portion shall never* want. p. 182. *to* p. 190.

Of Wants. *Such as have God for their portion, in all their* wants, *troubles, and tryals will run to their God, they will flye to the Lord as their only City of Refuge.* p. 269. *to* p. 279.

Of Willingness. *Such as would have God for their portion, must then be willing to be his portion.* p. 385, 386, 387.

God without all peradventure is that mans God, that is cordially willing to have him for his God. p. 430, 431, 432.

Of the World. *A man that hath God for his portion, looks upon the world as a poor low contemptible thing.* p. 305. *to* p. 311.

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